

ANIMECO

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Sounds On Celluloid
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Mononoke Hime
Miyazaki's Latest

Susano-o
Making A Comeback

Anime Bloodtypes

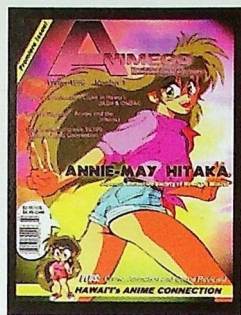
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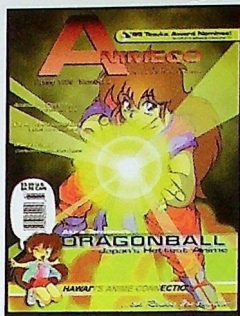


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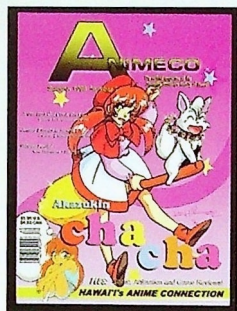
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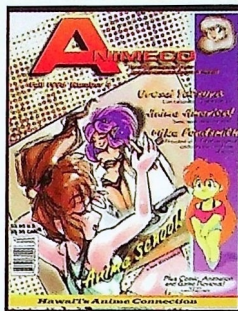
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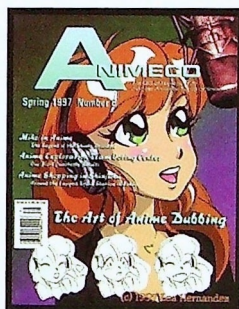
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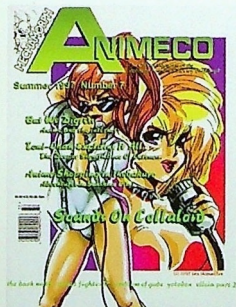
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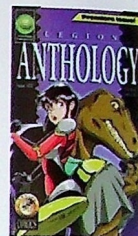
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a message from the president

Welcome back! So, how was your summer? Uh-huh...yeah...really? Well, you can forget all that now, 'cause it's autumn and you're back among your schoolbooks or your job, but you've still got your anime, and you've still got us!

You know your Zodiac sign, and you even know whether you're a Dragon or a Rat in the Chinese calendar, so you've got it all together, right? Guess again: in Japan, your day, your date (or chances for one), and even your destiny can be determined by...your blood type! In this issue, we examine blood types and how they affect anime characters we know and love. You may have more in common with your favorite character than you thought!

There's the second installment of "Sounds on Celluloid", which looks at music in Original Animation Videos (OAVs), as well as the music of *Robotech*. No, it *isn't* as bad as you remembered.

In the same vein, we have an exclusive interview with anime songwriter Linda Hennrick. Put on your *City Hunter* CD, sit back and find out where she's been and what she's done. You won't find this anywhere else but here. And still on the subject of sounds...what do all those odd sound effects in manga mean, and do they serve the same purpose as **POW!** or **SPLAT!**? The answers begin on page 17.

Toni-chan tells all about a Japanese deity who's been showing up in a lot of anime recently, from *Bastard!* to *Blue Seed*. Follow his checkered career in this issue, and when you're finished, go for a stroll down Orange Road with KJ Karvonen.

Plus our usual potpourri of 'Net news, reviews of anime and manga reviews, and more pictures of Maytel than anyone's seen in years!

It's been a while, and you know you need a break. C'mon in!

Milton Streeter, JASH President

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もののけ姫

Mononoke Hime Takes Japan by Storm

by Kumi Hirota



Hayao Miyazaki's latest animated film with Studio Ghibli has broken box office records across Japan with over 11 million viewers, and over 100 million dollars in box office receipts. *Mononoke Hime* was released on July 17th of this year. It is the most expensive Japanese animation movie ever made, costing over 2 billion yen to produce, using over 140,000 cels. This blockbuster hit will be taking Miyazaki's work to the U.S. and Europe in the near future as Disney and its subsidiaries have obtained the rights for international distribution.

Mononoke Hime is popular with viewers of all ages. The content and complexity of the story, however, are not quite suitable for movie-goers under 10 years of age.

The story takes place in Northern Japan during the medieval era, hundreds of years after the Yamato period. The protagonist Ashitaka (voice by Youji Matsuda) is trying to find a way to remove a curse that was placed on him; he killed a *Tatari* (forest deity) while defending his village. His travels take him to the Western country, which is where the main conflict of the

story takes place. It is an area of primeval forest, where the ancient nature gods and spirits do battle with humans who defile the environment—humans who cut down trees and smelt iron for their steel-making and weapons. The humans (known as the *Tatara mono*—iron making people) are led by Lady Eboshi Gozen. She is well loved and respected by her followers. One should not think of her as a villainess, however; she has saved young girls from brothels by buying their freedom, and allows them to work at Tatara-Ba even though previously no women were allowed to work there. She also accepts even the outcasts of society; this has earned her the loyalty of her people.

On the other side of this conflict are the nature gods. The nature gods are divided into factions. One is led by Moro no Kimi (voice by Akihiro Miwa), a 300-year-old mountain dog goddess. She hates humans (especially Eboshi Gozen,) for their invasion of the Shihi god's forest. Yet in spite of her hatred of humans, she raises the girl San (voice by Yuriko Ishida) as her own daughter. San shares her adopted mother's hatred for humans. She

rides on a huge mountain dog and constantly attacks the Iron-Makers village. Another faction among the nature gods is the one led by *Inoshihi Gami* (Boar God) (voice by Hisaya Morishige). *Inoshihi Gami* is the eldest of all the Boar gods and is 500 years old. He is in charge of the offensive against the humans and is in conflict with the Moro no Kimi faction.

A sub-plot exists, concerning a Monk and the Shihi god. The Monk Jiko (voice by Kaoru Kobayashi) is a member of the Shishou Ren, a mysterious organization which has ordered him to obtain the head of the Shihi God; it supposedly has the power to grant eternal youth. Jiko is the leader of the Ishibiya people and organizes hunters against the Shihi god.

In the middle of these conflicts Ashitaka and San meet and fall in love. Both try to stop the escalating cycle of violence. How does it end? Well, you'll have to see. See you at the movies!





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"Oi... Oi..."

"Maytel? Mater? Metal? Matel?
Me-teru?"

Yet another picture of "what's-her-name..."
-- Matsumoto Izumi

Why is our editor flat on her back, mumbling? The unprecedented amount of Maytel related items in this issue, especially the number of different spellings, was just a bit too much for her. As such, we unofficially refer to this as the "What's-her-name issue" of Animeco. To find out how you can benefit from this, check out page 12 for contest information.

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Please give to the poor chocolate-deprived mascot fund. Annie May Hitaka, c/o those Limelight Publishing guys.

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Former Animeco cover artist Lea Hernandez has a graphic novel, CATHEDRAL CHILD, coming out from Image Comics next March! Lea will be doing both writing and art for what she calls a "steampunk fantasy adventure Western" about a girl, a boy and their computer in the far-flung future of 1897 Texas.

Look for CATHEDRAL CHILD on your January Diamond Previews order form.



SOUNDS ON CELLULOID! Part 2

music in japanese animation

By Milton Streeter

THE OAVs

Original Animation Videos, or OAVs, have been part of the anime scene for over a decade now. They allow a creator a chance to place his work before the public without having to go through sponsors, who might desire changes or additions he does not wish to make, or simply to produce a series which would not require a mandatory run of 25 or more episodes. The very first OAV was *Dallos*, a space opera from 1983. While largely forgotten now, it proved the concept to be a good one. OAVs have provided innovations in anime video marketing, as well as new directions in the development of anime music.

The first truly great OAV was *Megazone 23* (1985). The plot, the mecha designs, the music, the cliffhanger ending, and above all the lovely, mysterious Eve, combined to make *Megazone 23* the anime feature of that year. **Miyasato Kumi** was the voice of the ultimate idol singer, and her voice perfectly matched Eve's ethereal beauty. (Victor Japan does seem to be able to pick 'em!) The music was also well suited to the story; dark and moody, it casts a shadow over the whole album, and the few upbeat pieces have a feeling of forced gaiety, reflecting the hero's realization that the world was not what he thought it was. So successful was *Megazone 23* that even after the concluding chapter was released in 1986, the fans demanded a third, and got it. *Megazone 23, Part III* (1988) was a kind of sequel, and I won't describe it here,

but Eve had a new look, courtesy of **Kitazume Hiroyuki**, and a new voice, courtesy of **Takaoka Saki**. So, who sounds better? You won't find out from me!

Without a doubt, 1986 was a great year for anime music. Music helped make *Bubblegum Crisis* the blockbuster hit that it was. The hard-rock scores of **Katayama**

Keiji, **Nakajima Masao**, and **Technovoyager's Makaino Koji**, plus the inspired singing of all the voice actresses, made an impact on anime fans around the world. But I don't have to tell you that; go listen to the music again, to songs like "Konya wa Hurricane", "Victory", or "Asu e Touch-

down" and remember how impressed you were when you first heard them.

Equally famous and just as successful was *Project A-ko*. The soundtrack was noteworthy for having not one, but three English-speakers to do the singing: **Annie Livingston**, **Samantha Newark**, and **Valerie Stevenson**. (Ms. Newark made

another contribution to animated music later that same year; she was the voice of

the American animated rock star/superheroine *Jem*.) The music was composed and produced by **Joey Carbone** and **Richie Zito**, of the influential '80s new wave band **The Ramones**.

The *Bubblegum Crisis* spin-off *AD Police* (1993) gave us the throbbing beat of **Lou Bonnevie**, who wrote several songs heard in the first video. Her song "Heartbreaker" fits in very well with the BGC universe. Another foreign singer-songwriter working in anime has been **Linda Hennrick** (see page 14), whose music has been heard in *Armitage III* (1995), although her work goes as far back as 1984. Both of these women have written songs which were sung either by themselves or by Japanese artists.

Other musically stylish OAVs include *Video Girl Ai* (1991), with the lilting voice of **Sakai Noriko**, and *Ah! My Goddess* (1992), whose voice actresses (**Inoue Kikuko**, **Tooma Yumi**, and **Hisakawa Aya**) sang under the alias of "Goddess Family Club". Our associate Vid-Kid has said that Ms. Inoue "can read a Stephen King story and make it sound like a fairy tale." If you've ever heard Belldandy speak, you'll probably agree.

There are Japanese women writing anime music, too; **Kanno Yoko** composed the music for the 1994 OAV series *Macross Plus*. Volume 1 may be too avant-garde for some, but Volume 2 has greater variety, and some of the most



L-R: Stevenson, Newark and Livingston



Hisakawa Aya



Bubble Gum Crisis

interesting melodies in recent memory. Check out "Voices", "Coma", or my favorite, "Idol Talk". Other women composers include **Endo Kyoko**, **Matsuura Yuki**, and **Kimura Maki**, all of whom also worked on Video Girl Ai. Incidentally, Ai's creator **Katsura Masakazu** wrote the show's end theme, and on volume 2, actually sang another song he wrote. To my knowledge, no other manga artist has ever done this.

Kasahara Hiroko is best known to American audiences as the voice of Ishtar in *Macross II* (1993). Her song "Moichido Love You" is in the Macross tradition of lush music and a girl who sings of love. Ms. Kasahara was also the voice of Armitage, and sang "Phantom World" on the Armitage "Polymatrix" album.

ROBOTECH

In the years since its debut, *Robotech* (1985) has brought many anime fans into the fold...and angered many other fans who knew the original stories. But because *Robotech* is still the only successful anime hybrid, and because it was so influential, it deserves mention on its own.

One of the series' greatest complaints has been about Minmay. Never mind how Carl Macek remade her personality; it's that singing!! Even her biggest fans

must wince when "My Time to Be A Star" ("Stage Fright") is heard for the twentieth time in the story. I don't know whose fault that was, but I'm sure **Reba West** is not to blame. She did her best with the material she had, and she made the role her own; if Minmay had spoken English, she would have sounded exactly like that.

As mentioned before, anime music is a business too, and not a few singers have begun or enhanced their careers with it. In 1982 Iijima Mari was just beginning, so the producers made sure that she had a chance to show her talents on a regular basis throughout *Macross's* 36 episodes. What this means is that she never had to sing the same song twice. Anyone who owns the original albums (or the 3-CD reissue, *MACROSS The Complete*) should know that every Minmay song on them was heard on the TV series.

Unfortunately for us, Reba West didn't get that kind of break, because anime music is not big business here in the USA (yet!). So when the *ROBOTECH Perfect Collection* was released, it went a long way toward righting the wrongs that were done to her. The four bonus tracks alone made the album worthwhile, for at last we got to hear Minmay's finest moment: her battle serenade to the SDF-1's

crew
as they
attack
Dolza's
flagship.

This scene has

been done three different ways, and it says a lot for the drama of the moment that all three are successful.

In the original series Minmay sings a ballad, "Ai wa Nagareru" (Love Has Gone). In the movie she sang a love song,

the film's title, "Do You Remember Love?" In the *Robotech* version, Minmay sings neither of lost love nor a bittersweet memory. "We Will Win" is a song of love battered but not broken, of love triumphant even in the face of disaster. In my opinion, "We Will Win" is a more satisfying song, and it stands up to comparison with the movie version (which I think was superior to the original series song). Her other bonus

track, "It's You", proves the impression of Minmay-as-airhead isn't true. We've heard this song only once, incomplete, at the end of episode #29 ("The Robotech Masters"), and it's the only sad song she gets to sing. There is no complicated arrangement, just flute, drum, and guitar...and Minmay's wistful voice, as she realizes what she's given up for fame.

No special music was done for the *Southern Cross* segment of the series. That's a shame. The original theme for the show, "Hoshi no Deja Vu" was sung by **Katori Yoko**, and was one of the outstanding pop hits in Japan when it was released in 1982. The BGM (Background music) was also some of the most ominous anime music I've ever heard—the *Robotech* version can't compare.

Steve Wittmack and **Michael Bradley** composed the Lancer song "Look Up (The Sky is Falling)", and Bradley, who was Lancer's voice actor, sang it. Despite its fast tempo, the lyrics remain true to the weary despair felt by those who live under the rule of the Invid. There is no direct parallel to this song in the original *Mospeada* music, but it would feel right at home there.

The *ROBOTECH Perfect Collection* remains the only anime music to put an American spin on a Japanese product. We'll talk about other foreigners in the field in the final installment.



Katori Yoko



Lynn Minmay



Why Do Anime Characters Act The Way They Do? Because...

IT'S IN THEIR BLOOD

Anime Characters & Their Blood Types

By Shizuku

For centuries, astrologers in the West have relied on the sun, the moon, and the stars to predict a person's personality and tendencies. Astrology arrived in Japan much more recently, and so it isn't as common to ask, "what's your sign?" in Japan, since most people are still unfamiliar with Western astrological compatibility. Instead, the Japanese ask, "what's your bloodtype?", and move through the intricate world of relationships from there.

The "science" of bloodtypes is relatively new in Japan, beginning only in this century after years of research. After all, bloodtype is a part of *you*, more so than the sun, the moon, and the stars. The compatibility of bloodtypes does not work like the "divine" aspects of compatibility in astrology (in which the planets are in favor of your relationship or they aren't), and instead teaches you how to best deal with the blood type in question. Harmonious relationships with all bloodtypes is possible, if you know how to handle them.

The "easiest" and cheapest way you can get your bloodtype figured out is to give blood at your local blood bank. They automatically test you for type when you do—or check your birth certificate, or ask your doctor. And finally, there's the method of reading the biographies of the following bloodtypes and figuring it out yourselves. So without further ado, here are the bloodtypes, in order of frequency:

O — 44% of the US population

The type O personality is the one who wants to be the first in every aspect of their lives, from business to love to his social life. You see it in most anime O types, from Tamahome from *Fushigi Yugi* to Ryu from *Street Fighter II*. This comes from their love of competition, of succeeding. They live for it. They thrive on it. They are highly motivated people who want to make a difference in the world. The best way to do this, for an O type, anyway, is to know what your goals are in life, and to pursue them with much gusto and finesse. Lynn Minmay, also an O type, wanted to be a singer from the very first, remember? And the O types do this with confidence, something that most O types have in abun-

dance.

O's make great leaders, because in their desire to be at the top, they learn and understand hierarchies and social pecking orders, and they adjust their behavior accordingly. O's aren't the most creative types in the world; they spend so much time figuring out how to get to the top of the pecking order, and then staying there, that they sacrifice little things like creativity and their sensitivity to the people that surround them. It's just that being at the top takes so much time, you see. But they make the best leaders—their confidence and unfailing optimism is contagious, and their knowledge of how organizations and



Noa Izumi
TYPE O

groups work is invaluable... and accurate. In most cases the O will be there at the helm, giving orders, when the rest of the crew has jumped ship.

Remember when I said that O types spend so much time trying to be first? This takes so much of their time and energy that, while they make the best leaders of all the blood types, (a solid, dependable boss that knows the system well) in an unfamiliar situation, they freeze. They become totally helpless. Take Akazukin ChaCha, for example. She uses her magic to save the day... but when the magic doesn't work, she runs around like a chicken without a head, trying to figure out what to do next. O types have invested so much time getting to know the competition that when the rules of the game change, the O is a fish out of the water; it's up to someone else to help them wade back in, that is, at least until they learn the new rules of the game. It shouldn't take them too long. The O's drive to succeed will see to that. But if you're helping an O out, beware! They hate to be criticized. It may seem a bit of a catch-22, seeing as how O's love to criticize everything. But a normally calm, cool O type will blow up like a volcano when someone steps on their delicate ego. Not

to worry though—O types don't hold grudges for very long.

In love, watch out for the O man. His desire to be first extends into his relationships. He needs to *think* he's in charge, even if he really isn't. He's very vocal, and in the courtship stage he'll shower you with compliments. The real joy for the O man, however, is in the chase. If it's too simple, too easy, he'll simply move on. Conversely, O women are very, *VERY* passionate, and want signs of security in love. Those gifts you give really mean something to her. Both genders are liable to be extremely jealous, so choose your liaisons well (Remember Kaori's hammer in almost every *City Hunter* episode?) In general, O types of both genders fall in love quickly and are easily disappointed, being the image-conscious folks that they are. They need to be careful—lest the image of the person they think they see is not the same as reality.

Some famous O's:

Asuka Sugou (Cyber Formula)
Chacha (Akazukin ChaCha)
Dark Shneider (Bastard!)
Elpi Ple (Gundam ZZ)
JJ (Zillion)
Kaori Makimura (City Hunter)
Katsumi Liqueur (Silent Möbius)
Noa Izumi (Patlabor)
Lynn Minmay (Macross)
Makoto Kino (Sailor Moon)
Ryo Sanada (Samurai Troopers)
A-ko (Project A-ko)
Ryu (Street Fighter II)
Shura-Oh Shurato (Shurato)
Tadao Yokoshima (GS Mikami)
Tamahome (Fushigi Yugi)
Usagi Tsukino (Sailor Moon)

A — 42% of the US population

A types make the world a happier place, with their love of order and harmony, and their attention to detail. In fact, they remember to do the simple, mundane things that most of the rest of us can't remember for one reason or another. Their famous self-control exists because they feel that by setting a positive example for others, the world will be a happier, more peaceful place to be. Ami Mizuno from *Sailor Moon* is the quiet, studious type, qualities that are greatly admired in Japan.

And the A is a wonderful example for the rest of us, the soul of propriety, following the strict rules of etiquette in any situation.

But this self-control disappears as soon as the doors close and the last guest leaves the party. A types are capable of doing anything if they're not caught. The one thing keeping the A type from jumping into the large shallow fountain in front of his apartment and soaking in it under the bright moonlight is the mere idea that the security guard may wander outside at any time and see him there. A types are good little girls and boys, not because they have a well developed sense of right and wrong, but because they're *supposed* to be good.

A types are generally introverts, and so they keep their more volatile emotions in check. And the more they do that, the greater the potential of their energy popping up when least expected, in a sudden flurry of energy, or a private temper tantrum. Why? Because beneath that good-natured shell of self-control, propriety, and good-naturedness, there is an insecure soul that trusts nothing but rules and regulations. Yuriko Star was very uncooperative towards her Captain in the first half of the *Irresponsible Captain Tylor* series because Tylor, the typical B-type, with his flagrant disregard for authority and rules, embodied something alien to her basic beliefs. A types are difficult people to know well, because of their very private nature. The key then, if you want to get to know one of them better, is to listen. A's love to talk, and tell stories. Be patient—they don't believe in editing, and go on for what seems like forever. But once you break

through that shell, A types are the most loyal and attentive of friends. A types look for long-time security, in their relationships and environment. But tread lightly. You will discover once they've opened their heart to you, A types have hearts that bruise easily. And like elephants, they never forget.

Speaking of environment, A's have a green thumb. They can create a healthy garden out of a dry, dead desert. But for some reason they neglect pets. Perhaps

it's because pets are so demanding. In any case, pets are a bad idea for a present for an A type, for any day of the year.

A types don't do well in jobs that require flexibility and spontaneous decision making; they also turn moody when things are out of control in the workplace. Peace and harmony again. With this in mind the perfect jobs for A's are those requiring teamwork. But don't expect any initiative out of them; they don't have a lot of it. They work well in groups, more often than not keeping the group...well, a group. Yuki Saito is a typical A type in the second *Silent Möbius* movie; she manages to convince Katsumi Liqueur, a very determined type O, back into the group. They make up for this lack of intuition, initiative, and spontaneity, in fact, by having the most imaginative minds around. A's fancy themselves excellent storytellers, and many novelists are A types. Of course, their storytelling abilities can also steer them towards gossip, and the spread of it, to... embellish it a bit.

An A's desire for security makes them the ideal partner. They are extremely difficult to seduce, but once you succeed, their devotion to you will be eternal. Security again. But if they've been emotionally hurt, they'll be out the door without looking back—security again; this time, the A type is looking for it somewhere else, somewhere where their precious A heart will be treasured.

Some famous As:

Ami Mizuno (Sailor Moon)
Apple (Zillion)
Chiriko (Fushigi Yugi)
Chun Li (Street Fighter II)
Hayato Kazami (Cyber Formula)
Hideaki Kurashige (Miracle Girls)
Kei and Yuri (Dirty Pair)
Lebia Maverick (Silent Möbius)
Nadia (Secret of Blue Water)
Rem (Dream Hunter Rem)
Sally Yoshinaga (Might Gain)
Shinobu Fujiwara (Dancougar)
Tia Note Youko (Bastard!)
Yui Takahana (Megazone 23)
Yuki Saiko (Silent Möbius)
Yuriko Star (Irresponsible Captain Tylor)

B — 10% of the US population

When the Japanese learn you're a B, they nod, and say, "My pace". That's the simple explanation for a B and their ability to do whatever they want, whenever they want. You can pick out the B in a crowd easily. They're the straightforward, non-conformist types, flagrantly ignoring re-

strictions, traditions, and social niceties. Their tolerance for such things is almost nil, and they make a habit of ignoring it, or, most likely, forgetting it. But I'll get back to that later. Ignoring the norm is what gets them picked out of the crowd every time. B's will call anyone friend, regardless of status, gender, or race. Look at Leona Ozaki of *Dominion*, the only female in the Tank Police—how's that for nonconformist—her best friend is a tank. B's prize honesty (their straightforward natures won't allow for anything else), and they will demand it of their friends. They can sniff out lies like a bloodhound. B's themselves can't lie very well either.



Leona Ozaki
TYPE B

It's their disregard for rules and authority that gives them the ability to innovate. Their creativity, talent, flexibility, and innovation are seemingly limitless, and that's the problem. Their creativity is spontaneous, and they dream up the solution to a difficult problem long before any other bloodtype does, and it's baffling to most non-B types, who come to conclusions the normal way... methodically, through reason. Did anyone on the *Soyokaze* understand what its irresponsible captain, Justy Ueki Tylor, was going to do next? And yet no one can fault his brilliance. B's find it almost impossible to conform; it's against their nature. At work, this makes them lousy at teamwork, and their capricious natures make them a bit difficult for their superiors to handle. And B's get bored easily. B's often end up making professions of their hobbies and pastimes—that way, they never get bored.

Interestingly enough, due to their positive reception to new ideas and experiences, B's have a multitude of interests. Perhaps it's because of this receptivity they are more prone to having parapsychological phenomena happening to them... and like the B types they are, they take it in stride—many B types are mediums, magicians and the like.

B's are, surprisingly enough, single minded when concentrating on a problem. Forceful is more like it. The B's confidence in their quick thinking makes for a strong-willed, forceful person. They con-



Nadia
TYPE A

centrate the force of this incredible will onto a problem, and zero in on it—problem is, they're concentrating so hard on it that they forget other ones. B types get so absorbed this way that they forget everything else, lost in the intricacies of the problem, or, as most people see them, in another world. Here's the forgetfulness I mentioned earlier. B types hoard so much information that they're liable to forget some of it. B's are notoriously late, and messy. They forget where they're going, and why. Sometimes this absent-mindedness is a good thing; when they suffer from shock or emotional distress they react quickly and passionately, but recover just as quickly. Perhaps it's because they've forgotten about it; more likely, something else more important has come to their attention to take its place.

B people can cook well. If the way to your heart is through your stomach, you should find a nice B to fatten you up. B women, when they fall in love, *REALLY* fall in love, giving up everything for their intended. B women are wild and good humored, and they also like to be physically close to their partner, from making frequent phone calls, visiting him at work...she will always make herself available. B women cry at B movies, and need a strong shoulder to cry into. They like that. But if you're not as attentive...well. The B woman will pack up and move on. The B man, however, is looking for a relationship with little or no responsibility. Yet, the B man will be filled with guilt after an affair. B's bring their unconventional personalities into their relationships; life with a B will never be boring.

Some famous B's:

Annie-May Yasuko Hitaka (Mascot, *Animeco*)
 Elle Bianno (Gundam ZZ)
 Justy Ueki Tylor (Irresponsible Captain Tylor)
 Kein Wakaba (Dragonar)
 Ken (Street Fighter II)
 Kiddy Phenil (Silent Möbius)
 Leona Ozaki (Dominion)
 Masato Shikibu (Dancougar)
 Miaka Yuuki (Fushigi Yugi)
 Minako Aino (Sailor Moon)
 Nuriko (Fushigi Yugi)
 Seiji Date (Samurai Troopers)
 Shogo Yahagi (Megazone 23)
 Wataru Ikusabe (Wataru)
 Yellow Belmont (Genesis Climber Mospeada)
 Yuuya Noda (Miracle Girls)

AB — 4% of the US population

AB blood is common among mediums, shamans, clairvoyants, and the like.

In fact, if you meet someone in one of these professions they are most likely to be a AB. It's odd, really, since AB's are the most rational of all the blood types. In fact, they are too rational. They even analyze themselves, constantly—they are truly their own critics. But they recover from their mistakes easily, and they think the rest of the world is just like them... so they criticize others. They're the world's worst backseat drivers. But the biggest mistake anyone of another bloodtype can make is to involve themselves in a logical argument with an AB. As soon as an AB finds something that doesn't stand up to logic or reason, they will comment on it, regardless of location or circumstance. AB's have a tendency to destroy the simple ideas, the fantasies that you like to carry around with you, if they're not logical.

Their calm, cool exterior makes them look like they always know what's going on, and it also makes them look smarter than they actually are. Of course, their analytical skills are kept in check by their easygoing, comfortable yet cool personality—a personality that draws people of other types to the AB like a magnet. Their wry humor does it too, the ability to be funny without trying to be. The AB type, however, manages to keep all of these people at a distance; they dislike intimacy.

AB's are the organizers of the world. They somehow get people together to work in groups, and they are masters of organization. They are also punctual, reliable, and hard workers that work well under pressure. What more could the CEO of a company ask for? Nami Yamigumo from *Silent Mobius* is very neat, practical, and organized. She's also the spiritual one of the group...

AB's have a gift for seeing both sides of a particular problem or dispute. Like true justice, who is blind to color, race, or nationality, the AB's ability to rationalize their way through any problem makes them excellent diplomats and mediators. And they have a strong sense of justice too. They can't be flattered, either; their analytical abilities enable them to see through flattery for what it is. To get on the good side of an AB you must reason with them, to sway them into your camp. Once

they're convinced, they'll stop at nothing to see it, whatever "it" is, to the end. Unless, of course, they reason it out again, and upon doing so, decide that they're on the wrong side. AB's are known for their diplomacy, but certainly not for their loyalty. Loyalty is, of course, irrational, and making decisions is irrational as well. What? You ask. An AB is rational! Shouldn't they be able to reach the correct answer to the problem with their superior reasoning abilities? Not so. For all that they reason through both sides of an argument, the decision itself, the choice to attach themselves to one side or the other, is irrational. Therefore

they have a difficult time making decisions, when it comes down to it. Perhaps that's why the famous City Hunter, Ryo Saeba, chases all the women he sees... because he can't choose just one!

As you may guess, AB types rarely lose control but when they do, watch out! They become dangerous, and childish. But an AB is always self-indulgent when it comes to talking. In general, they are extravagant but somehow not greedy, from their expensive toys to their food. And they are also self-indulgent when it comes to sleep. In this, however, we should be indulgent as well, for an AB truly cannot function on little sleep. They don't do any good work when they're tired, but are back to normal after a few hours of sleep.

The organized lives of AB's leaves them with plenty of room to fantasize, and they're incurable romantics. Because they are highly sensitive individuals behind that layer of reason and organization, they get very upset when they find out the object of their affections has strayed! Never, ever cross an AB that's in love with you. You will never, ever survive to tell the tale.

Some famous ABs:

Camille Vidan (Z Gundam)
 Eve Tokimatsuri (Megazone 23)
 Leina Ashta (Gundam ZZ)
 Miki Jounouchi (Cyber Formula)
 Nami Yamigumo (Silent Möbius)
 Rei Hino (Sailor Moon)
 Reiko Mikami (GS Mikami)
 Rose Patenton (Dragonar)
 Ryo Saeba (City Hunter)
 Ryouko (Tenchii Muyou)
 Sara Yuuki (Dancougar)
 Shin Mouri (Samurai Troopers)
 Shine-cha (Akazukin Cha Cha)
 Touma Hashiba (Samurai Troopers)
 Yui Hongou (Fushigi Yugi)



Ryo Saeba
TYPE AB



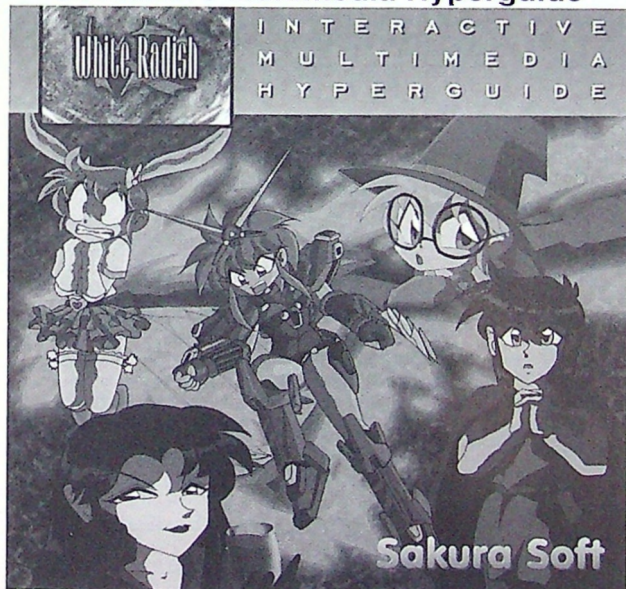


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or even
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NEW CONTEST!

Yup, we had so much fun with our last contest we decided to have another one. This time, we want you to give us your best count of the pictures of "what's her name" (Maytel, Mater, however you want to call her) PLUS the number of times her name was mentioned regardless of the spelling. This should keep you guys occupied for a good long time (at least 15 to 20 minutes, anyway). Oh, and the prizes? This time we shall include, but not be limited to the following: a Ziploc® bag, a cool but used stamp, a Loony Toons™ sticker, a 3.5" floppy disk (blank, PC formatted), a random Japanese anime laserdisc courtesy of our friends at A Little Light [(808) 591-0793 - shameless plug], and of course a take-out menu from L&L Drive Inn suitable for framing. The staff at Animeco have the last say as to the accurate count due to our high-tech, sophisticated computation techniques, right Annie?

"... 7 ... 9 ... Damn it! You made me lose count!
1 ... 2 ... 3 ..."

Anyway, in the case of a tie, a random drawing will be made to determine the winner. Other prizes may be available for runner up entries depending on if we have money or not. Void where prohibited by law. Friends of Animeco and staff of Limelight Publishing Co. need not bother 'cause it would look like cheating. (Sorry Annie!)

"... 11 ... 10 ... You did it again! Baka yaro!"

LETTERS

From: jessie19@idt.net (Jesse Eichenlaub)
To: AYHitaka@aol.com

Dear J.A.S.H. people,

You may be happy to know that your magazine makes it all the way to at least one magazine store in Rochester, NY (sometimes).

I am working on a computer animated short as part of a newfound computer animation hobby and want to add professionally done dialogue to it. Can you recommend any studios that do quality dubbing or voice acting work, or perhaps an acting school that might want to give its students an opportunity to do this? I'm willing to spend money on it (within reason) to get a professional sounding result.

I see from your web page that the current issue of Animeco will feature articles on dubbing. If the aforementioned newsstand doesn't have the latest issue, I'll send in a subscription to get it.

Thanks for your time.

Jesse Eichenlaub

Recommend a dubbing studio, huh? Well you could try ZRO Limits over in Granada Hills, California. The dubbing issue was issue #6 where we had a look at them. The last I heard was that they are in the process of moving, so if you would like to contact them, try (818) 832-8910. - wh

Dear Animeco,

I was just reading your Fall '96 issue when I came across an article by Roy Sato about Anime & Manga School in Japan. I am very serious about the possibility of drawing Manga for a living, so I was wondering if you could send me addresses and information on these schools.

Sincerely,
John McLucas, Middletown, RI

Sure thing John. Just remember, that if you contact them, all correspondence must be in Japanese. Their address is:

*Yoyogi Anime Gakuin
Yoyogi 1-57-3-N1
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151 JAPAN*

Response to K. J. Karvonen

From: tom bryant <tombryant@muskegon.com>
To: whols@aloha.net
Subject: Animeco Magazine

Dear Bill,

Thanks for such a great magazine! I ran across your magazine at the local Barnes and Noble here in Muskegon. I have been interested in Anime for some time and I consider myself fortunate to have a couple of sources of anime in Grand Rapids. Between Media Play, Best Buy, and the comics shop Magnum Opus. You folks really do a top notch job!

Of course I can't leave without mentioning your extremely lovely mascot Annie Hitaka. Gee whiz what a babe! I know some may think she is just good looking window dressing, but hey, she sure makes a better mascot than some oversized chunk of steel like an Ingram 98 or MarshyDog. You're one of the great ones Annie.

Thank you again for the soapbox. Keep up the good work. With publications like this, anime will continue to grow in popularity.

Thomas H. Bryant

Cheese Whiz?! Good looking window dressing?! Oversized chunk of steel?! Why, you...

Annie! Annie! Calm down! He's giving you a compliment! Put the hammer down!

Oh. Sorry.

- um, staff

Bad review, bad review - What you gonna do? Nothing, that's what. That was my initial response to K.J. Karvonen's negative review ["Bad Book, Bad Book - What You Gonna Do?"] of my book *Samurai From Outer Space* in the last edition of *Animeco*. After all, *Samurai From Outer Space* has received a lot of favorable response. One negative review isn't going to kill me. However, Mr. Karvonen's review is so wildly inaccurate in relating what my book actually says that I feel I should set the record straight on at least a few major points.

First, I do not suggest that learning Japanese or learning about Japan is pointless since American fans will interpret *anime* differently in any case as Mr. Karvonen claims. *Samurai From Outer Space* discusses *anime* themes from two perspectives: 1) the cultural, religious and historical context from which they are derived, and 2) the reasons why they are attractive to an audience [in this case, Americans] for which they were never intended. This two-perspective approach is introduced in the first chapter and each new topic is discussed separately from both perspectives. I think this is what Mr. Karvonen is referring to when he accuses me of contradicting myself and asks "Which is it? It can't be both." My point is that it can be both. I can't tell whether Mr. Karvonen failed to understand this point or just disagrees with it.

Second, I do not claim that Takahashi, Matsumoto, or any other Japanese cartoonist is a feminist in the American sense. To the contrary, I argue that the way in which *anime* deals with gender issues reflects both the traditional and changing roles of men and women in Japan, and that because of this, it provides Americans with "a different way of looking at gender issues, one that cannot easily be defined as feminist or anti-feminist." (p. 136)

Third, I do not advocate dubbing over subtitles. I personally prefer subtitles, but I don't take either side in my book. The quotation which Mr. Karvonen uses out of context precedes a discussion of the merits and demerits of both methods, and the reasons why a cultural context is as important as language in understanding *anime*.

Last, I did not ignore primary sources or "make up" facts as Mr. Karvonen claims. I used plenty of primary and secondary sources in detailing the ancient myths, religions, warrior sagas and histories I discuss in *Samurai*; I also used a number of books and articles on American popular culture. And, of course, I used the *anime* which are primary sources in themselves. Relating the one to the other is called "analysis," not "making up facts."

For Mr. Karvonen, however, there seems to be only one kind of primary source: interviews with the individual cartoonists. And there is only one kind of book that can be written about *anime*: a study based on such interviews.

Samurai From Outer Space is not that kind of book. I never claimed it was, so there is no reason for Mr. Karvonen to carry on as if he had unmasked the major deception of the twentieth century.

Antonia Levi

Subj: Animeco beats Animerica anytime!
Date: 97-08-26 02:45:04 EDT
From: IRIA Zeram
To: AYHitaka

Hello! I love ANIMECO! You are a FOR THE FANS BY FANS Magazine!
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Gambatte!

Iria the Anime Huntress

Why...thank you. - wh



INTERVIEW = LINDA

If Linda Hennrick's name is unknown to you, her music probably isn't—not if you've seen *Area 88* or *Armitage III*. A successful songwriter in several countries and genres, the artists who have recorded her songs sounds like a "Who's Who" of the Pacific Rim! We managed to track her down for this interview. While she declined to provide us with a photograph for publication, she readily agreed to answer our questions.

Many thanks to our associate Wendell Hong, and to Mr. Morijiri and Ms. Hiroe Tsukamoto of PIO-NEER LDC for their gracious help in setting up the interview.

Who is Linda Hennrick?

I am a lyricist, vocalist, and sometime songwriter. I was born on Guam, but grew up in Texas, Pennsylvania, and California. I now reside in Tokyo, married, no children.

What is your musical background?

While growing up, I sang with various church and school choral groups as well as amateur folk groups. When I was still a high school student, I auditioned for and was accepted into a semi-professional singing group called the "Young Americans", 30 high school and college students from the Los Angeles area. We performed on stage and TV in the US, including the *Ed Sullivan Show* and our own *Young Americans* special. I first came to Japan with the Young Americans in 1968, but later formed a folk-rock group called "The Three" with two other former Young Americans. We performed on stage and TV in Japan with the *Osmond Brothers*, *Toi et Moi*, and *Betsy and Chris* (the latter two groups very popular in Japan at the time). Still later, I was lead singer for a pop-rock group called *Oasis* (not related to the now-popular British group), and we released an album of songs written by myself and another writer, Terada Tomio.

What other work besides anime

music have you done?

I have written the lyrics to TV theme songs (*Abunai Deka*, *Yasei no Ookoku*, which I also sang), children's TV shows (NHK's *Eigo De Asobo*), TV anime (*City Hunter*), movies (*Godzilla*, two Hong Kong

movies starring Jackie Chan before he became known worldwide), and TV commercials (the DeBeers diamond syndicate, Asahi, Suntory, and Budweiser beer, and Toyota, among others). I've also written for Japanese singers such as: Alfee, ANRI (the two ly-

GALVION

rics I wrote for her were duets, one with Johnny Gill, and another with Peabo Bryson); Anzen Chitai, Checkers, Circus, Go Hiromi, Jinnai Takanori, J-Walk, Kondo Masahiko, Momoi Kaori, Moriyama Ryoko, Saito Yuki (the original *Sukeban Deka*), Shiratori Emiko, Stardust Revue, Sugiyama Kiyotaka, Suzuki Kiyomi, Tamori, Three Graces, Time Five, Tone Mariko, T-Square, Tsunoda Hiro and Japs Gaps, and Yanagi George. And I've written pieces sung by other artists such as: George Benson, Kenny Cetera, Rosemary Clooney, Linda Hopkins, Ben E. King, and Kiki (U.S.); Marlene (Philippines); Silje (Norway); Jackie Chan and Alan Tam (Hong Kong).

The oldest piece of your work we could find was dated 1984. How long have you been doing this?

I began writing lyrics professionally in 1978. My first composition was for a TV drama

series. The song was called "Faded Love", the melody was a Tchaikovsky piano concerto, and it was sung by Rosemary Clooney. The *Galvion* series in 1984 was my first piece for anime.

Do you create music for a specific production, or is there a 'pool' that everyone contributes to, for the producers to choose from?

I write for specific productions, so all the lyrics are tailor-made for each.

Do you know of other English-speaking songwriters in Japan, such as Jim Steele (Dancougar) or Lou Bonnevie (AD Police)?

Yes, I do, but I am not familiar with either Jim Steele or Lou Bonnevie.

What works have you done in the West?

Some of the pieces I've produced for movies or on CDs that have made it to the West, such as anime and Jackie Chan movies, weren't originally for release in the West. The only thing I've written especially for foreign distribution have been CM (TV commercial) lyrics, such as a Sony Handycam CM for Australia and a Honda CM for Southeast Asia.

The Japanese singer MIO has done a number of your songs—and done them so well, it's as if they were written especially for her. Were they?

MIO is a very talented singer who puts her whole heart into her work. I don't write specifically for her voice, but I've been in the studio when she's recorded my pieces and helped her with pronunciation, phrasing, breathing, and expression, so that she's comfortable with the song. She takes it from there.



AREA 88

HENNRICK

Of the anime-related songs you've written, what is your favorite?

The newest piece I'm working on is always my favorite, but I've enjoyed each of the anime I've done for different reasons: *Galvion* because it was my first anime project; *Area 88* because of the wide variety of songs that Nitta Ichiro, a very talented songwriter, wrote for the project; "Oblivion" because it is such a haunting melody and MIO put in an excellent performance; and *Armitage III* because I had a chance to sing something myself for a change!



ARMITAGE III

Do you ever plan to produce an album of your own, and if so, will it be released in the U.S.?

Some-day I would like very

much to produce an album of my own material and am always working toward that goal, but I don't know when that will be. Since I write English lyrics, I definitely would want to release anything I do in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Have you any words to say to the fans?

A writer is perhaps the least visible of all artists because there is no direct contact with the general public, and therefore no feedback about whether the public loves or hates your work. Only indirectly, through sales, or if we're asked to contribute to the next project, do we know if our work is successful or not. I'm grateful to everyone that has bought anything I've written and doubly grateful if they liked it as well! THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

A Partial Discography of Linda Hennrick:

Galvion (1984):

"Be A Hero"

Area 88 (1985):

"How Far To Paradise",

"Lovers' Holiday"

"Long Ago and So Far Away"

"Razor's Edge"

"Messin' With the New Kids"



City Hunter/City Hunter 2 (1987/88):

"My Private Eye"

"Footsteps" (with Yano Tatsumi)

"Give Me Your Love Tonight" (with Kunioshi Ryoichi)

"Name of the Game" (with Ogura Ryo)

"Without You" (with Ogura Ryo)

Gundam 0083: Stardust Memory (1991/92):

"Back to Paradise"

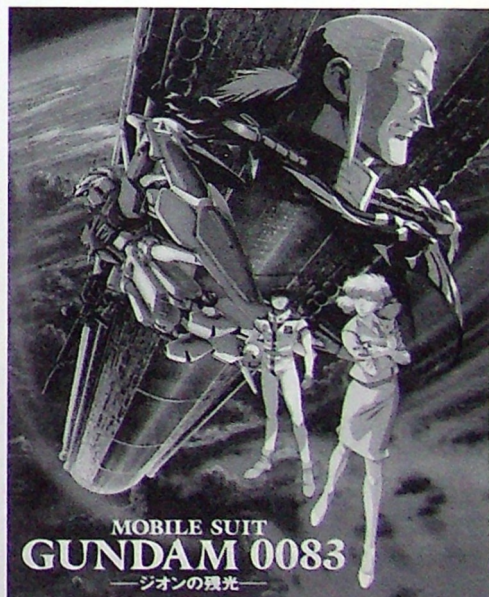
"Star Bright"

"Oblivion"

Armitage III (1995):

"Here With You"

"Cheat! Cheat!"



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SOUNDS

by Gilles Poitras

There is more to enjoying anime and manga than just the story and characters. Much of what is happening is in a cultural context that we can easily miss, especially if we assume that what we are enjoying is just a product of Hollywood or New York.

Anime and manga come from a particular social context, showing up in small sounds that are unique to Japan. In this article I'll look at sounds which flesh out the environment of a story. These sounds can help us understand the season of the year, the feelings of characters, and what is going on out of view. These sounds are not always easy for non-Japanese to identify. I hope to clarify a few of them here as an aid to a greater enjoyment of anime and manga. Note, all references here are taken from translated versions released in the USA.

But why manga, isn't sound something heard, not read? Actually, sounds in manga are expressed with great creativity, a creativity not found in American comics. Pull a volume of *Ranma 1/2* off of the shelf and you will find that few pages are left without a sound effect. There are even sounds in manga for things that don't make sounds, like "peko" for a slight bow or "chira" for when a character glances out of the corner of an eye, or "kyoro kyoro" for looking back and forth. In anime the sound of blinking is even added; you won't need to pay much attention to catch this one.

One of the most common sounds that is unusual to non-Japanese, and therefore easily noticed, is the high pitched repetitive call of the *semi*, or cicada. When you hear the *semi* you know it is summer and hot as that is the time of year that this insect is commonly heard. One friend said he thought he was going out of his mind with this constant sound, every day that he was in Japan. Some clear examples of this sound are at the beginning of the first

Tenchi Muyo! and *You're Under Arrest* OAV tapes, as well as on page 22 of volume 5 of the Viz translation of *Ranma 1/2* where it is rather well expressed as "chreeee chreeee".



a sound of summer:
the cicada

made of glass with a design painted on the inside. Since many stories take place in Tokyo, formerly called Edo, this design of *furin* is quite common. We see several *furin*, including round *Edo furin*, for sale at the festival in the *Maison Ikkoku* manga (v. 3 p.122) and see, as well as hear, one in the second *Oh My Goddess* anime tape.

A bell-like percussion instrument that looks like a bowl on a cushion is the *kinsu*. In anime these usually are seen when someone is at a *butsudan*, or Buddhist altar, which functions as a memorial altar for dead family members. In the *Tenchi Universe* series, we see one of these rung by Kiyone at an altar to Mihoshi (Tape 2 Ep. 5), and later by Tenchi's grandfather (Tape 6 "Tenchi Muyo in Space 2" Ep. 17). In the *Ranma 1/2* TV series we see Dr. Tofu ring a *kinsu* at a *butsudan* for his father in the "Pelvic Fortune Telling" episode.

A much larger bell sound is that of the *bonsho*, the Buddhist Temple Bell, which has a very deep sound. It is slowly rung so that the next ring comes as the preceding one has almost faded away. Sometimes these are used to highlight dramatic moments



shishiodoshi

after something has just happened, or to indicate a hard impact as when Kyosuke and Hayakawa ram their heads together by accident in the *Kimagure Orange Road* OAV "Spring is for Idols".

Another sound associated with Buddhism is that of the *mokugyo*, a wooden fish shaped instrument. These are rarely seen but can be heard at Zenigata's house as he chants in the opening credits of *Lupin III The Fuma Conspiracy*, and as the priest chants in part one of *Sanshiro the Judoist*.

There may be a scene next to a garden, in which you might not see a *shishiodoshi* but you could hear its hollow wooden sound as it hits a rock in a slow rhythm.

The *shishiodoshi* is a length of bamboo, mounted to catch a slow stream of water. When it is full enough it tips over, empties, hits a rock as it falls back into place. In fact you may not even see the garden at all, but instead at a wealthy house that naturally would have such a garden attached to it. Mendou's garden has one of these in the *Urusei Yatsura* TV series (Tape 13 Episode 50 story 73).

There are even words to listen to in anime, in the songs and in the speech of characters. Foreign words commonly crop up, not only English words but also Portu-

and their significance

guese, Spanish and French words can be heard if you listen carefully. You may hear Ranma say "thank you" on occasion or someone say "bye bye", which is fairly common. Sakura Yamazaki in *Blue Seed* uses quite a variety of English words as does that other anime bad girl, Pixy Misa, in the *Pretty Sammy* OAVs. Some people in Japan commonly use foreign words simply to be chic, much like Americans using Yiddish, French or Japanese words and phrases. And who is more chic than Urd, who sprinkles her speech with English and French on more than one occasion in the *Oh My Goddess* OAV series.

Music is another sound that is in every anime; while pop tunes may be understandable in their style to non-Japanese, some music is of a more traditional nature. Traditional forms of music come into stories, usually in the forms of flutes or *shamisen*, the traditional three stringed musical instrument that vaguely resembles a small square banjo with a long neck. We see, and hear, a line of old women play the shamisen in Godai's dream in *Maison Ikkoku* (Tape 3 Ep. 5)

However, the most colorful musicians in anime are the *chindonya*, a small group consisting of at least a percussionist, with a second musician playing a wind instrument, often a clarinet. There may be other musicians but these two are the most common. The *chindonya* goes back to the Meiji Era as a form of attracting people to new businesses. These groups are colorfully dressed and are quite a sight to see even if they are doing this at night with no one around, as in the *Urusei Yatsura* movie *Beautiful Dreamer*.

Another 'musical', or certainly noisy, phenomenon is the *pachinko* (pin-ball) parlor with its bright lights and loud recorded music playing from speakers. The Uwasu-no-Toraya *Pachinko* Parlor in *Maison Ikkoku* (Tape 2 Ep 4), with its blaring noise and amplified call for people to come in, is perhaps the best example.

A common household sound is that of a *shoji* or *fusuma* being slid open or closed. The *shoji* is a sliding screen which acts as a door to a room, or a cover to a window. It is a common feature in Japa-

nese buildings. A *fusuma* is more opaque and used for interior room and closet doors. The sound of these can even serve to convey emotion as when an angry character slams the *shoji* open or closed. Even modern buildings are commonly found with these as is the case with Ataru's home in *Urusei Yatsura*, where the front door is hinged but the interior doors are sliding.

Then there are the sounds of vendors making their rounds through the neighborhoods. Many items are still sold by vendors who wander through the neighborhoods on foot, bike or motor vehicle.

Such a sound associated with summer is goldfish sellers, wandering the streets chanting "*kingyo, kingyo*", ("goldfish, goldfish"), as they walk among the neighborhoods with tubs of goldfish on a pole. The *Urusei Yatsura* TV series (Tape 19) has an excellent example in the flashback when Cherry reminds Sakura of the time her powers first manifested. The wandering goldfish seller is also a symbol of the past here, as this occupation is far less common today than even a generation ago.

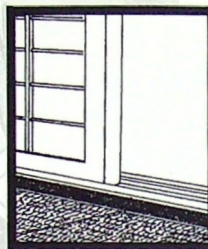
More often heard is the tofu seller on his bike, with a tub of tofu for sale on the back. They blow a tin horn, called a *charumera*, to let folks know they are in the area. Since most Japanese buy their *tofu* fresh, this saves the trouble of carrying tofu immersed in water home from the store. A tofu seller is seen in *Maison Ikkoku* (Tape 6 Ep.11 "Kentarō's First Love! What's Age Got to do With It?").

A sound I have only heard in one anime is that of the laundry pole seller. The Japanese rarely use clothes lines, and instead use poles to hang clothes. These poles are commonly seen in anime and manga. In the past they would have been bamboo but today plastic rods are used. A common way to buy these are from vendors who travel the neighborhoods crying "*saoya*" and "*saodake*". In the 2nd part of the *Ranma 1/2* OAV "The One to Carry On" we hear and see such a pole seller in a truck with loudspeakers.

Then there are the sounds that are familiar, but somehow different. The best example of this is trains and train crossings. These are familiar sounds to non-Japanese, but why are they heard so often, and why do trains seem to be almost everywhere? This is because trains are very common in Japan. Japan has a high population density, approximately 125 million people in a nation with the land mass of California. Most of that land is too steep to build on, so crowded cities with scarce real estate is the result. Why spend money on cars when there is little or no place to park them and fuel is expensive? Why use up space for four lane roads when you can build more shops and houses by having narrow streets? For day to day needs, neighborhood shopping areas are common—and if you need to go farther away, you simply take the local mass transit, often a train, to where you want to go. In fact, the lack of private vehicles is one of the reasons that street vendors like those mentioned above continue to make a living. Who would want to carry home a heavy bag of tofu or a long laundry pole by mass transit or on foot? So if a story takes place in a large city like Tokyo or Osaka, where there are a large number of private train lines, the odds are good that some event will take place on, in sight of, or within earshot of a moving train.

So the next time you watch anime or read manga, pay a little attention to the sounds—these add to the environment of the story by giving it a cultural context different from what is familiar to non-Japanese. And remember, all of this adds to the pleasure of viewing anime and reading manga.

Note: this article is based on entries from my forthcoming book, tentatively entitled, *The Anime Companion*, coming out next spring from Stone Bridge Press. The book is a highly expanded and rewritten version of my *Japanese Cultural Details in Anime and Manga* document that is available on my web pages. <http://www.sirius.com/~cowpunk/>



shoji



shamisen



Susano-o, Japan's ancient storm god, is enjoying a come-back in anime these days. That's not surprising. A bit of a hero, a bit of a villain, and sometimes a bit of a fool, *Susano-o* is a natural for anime.

Susano-o's story is found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* which date back to the early 8th century, but his story is older than that. These ancient texts are simply a collection of oral traditions written down by scribes, when Japan became a literate culture. They are the oldest records we have of Shinto, Japan's indigenous religion. Like all oral traditions, Shinto stories vary a lot, and the scribes who took them down in the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* faithfully included every version they heard. *Susano-o*'s story is more consistent than most.

Susano-o was the brother of *Amaterasu*, the sun goddess who reigns over the Shinto pantheon of some 8 million gods. She also ruled over Heaven. He got the oceans. Sibling rivalry does not begin to describe their relationship. Their most spectacular feud occurred when *Susano-o* visited his sister's home on the celestial plains. Once there, he trampled her rice paddies, shit on her throne, and finally hurled a flayed colt into her weaving chambers. That did it. Disgusted, *Amaterasu* fled to a nearby cave, sealed the entrance with a large rock, and refused to come out. Deprived of her light, the earth began to die. The other gods gathered and came up with a plan. They held a huge party outside the cave complete with music, dancing and a wild striptease by *Uzume*, the Dread Female of Heaven. *Amaterasu* was a party animal at heart and eventually she peeked out to see what was causing all the ruckus. The

force god grabbed her and pulled her the rest of the

the Return OF Susano-o

further by her own beautiful reflection in a mirror. The texts vary on this point. All agree, however, that once she was out, the gods sealed up the cave using the original boulder bound with a *shimenawa*, a sacred rope of the type that is now rou-

tinely tied around sacred rocks, trees and other places and things sacred to Shinto. *Amaterasu* was annoyed by their trick at first, but when she realized the damage her sulking fit had caused, she forgave them all...except *Susano-o*. He was banished from Heaven and ordered to become the new lord of *Yomi*, the Shinto underworld of the dead.

When westerners, and especially Christian missionaries, first heard this story, they tried to equate *Susano-o* with Lucifer, an angel turned evil and exiled to Hell. That's not really accurate. The Shinto idea of *Yomi* is not analogous with the Christian idea of Hell. There is no judgment call involved. All dead souls wind up in *Yomi* regardless of how they lived. And *Yomi* is not a nice place. It's a place of darkness and decay. It's a grave. Similarly, *Susano-o* is no Satan. He might be wild, but he could also be kind, and sometimes downright heroic.

Susano-o's heroic side came into play when, on his way to *Yomi*, he passed through earth. There he met a couple with a problem, a very large, eight-headed problem. It was a dragon who demanded that they serve up a daughter a year as his dinner. They had started with eight daughters, but now they had only one left, *Princess Kushinada*, and she was due to be served up as dragon chow shortly. They asked *Susano-o* for help. He used his magic to change *Princess Kushinada* into a decorative comb, which he placed in his hair. Then, when the dragon turned up, he regaled the beast with eight large tubs of sake, one for each head. When the dragon passed out, *Susano-o* cut off all its heads. In the dragon's tail, he found a magical sword called *kusanagi* (grass cutter) which he gave to his sister as a peace offering. As for *Princess Kushinada*, as soon as she stopped being a comb, he married her. They lived happily for a time in *Izumo*, but eventually *Susano-o* got restless. He continued his journey and became the lord of *Yomi*.

Susano-o's story is one of the best known in Japan. It's a bit like the story of Adam and Eve in America; everyone knows it regardless of what religion they practice. And it gets a lot of play in anime. The *Maison Ikkoku* crowd play off of it when they lure *Godai* from his closet, by telling him that Kyoko

has started to strip. In *Ranma**, the dragon makes a return appearance in the "An Akane to Remember" episode. And Yoshio of *Tenchi Muyo!* shares a lot of *Susano-o*'s characteristics.

Some anime and manga go much further, however. In the first volume of Tezuka

Osamu's now classic manga *Hi no Tori* (Phoenix), Shinto legends combine with historical and archeological theories to produce a new version of the stories as they might really have happened. In Tezuka's version, Shinto deities are recast as rulers and warriors of the many tribes who battled for supremacy over Japan in the 2nd century. Their actions, although often spectacular and sometimes bizarre, are not magical. The only magic Tezuka permitted in *Hi no Tori* was the symbolic magic of the phoenix itself: a bird of great beauty and power, the object of everyone's desire, and attainable by no one.

In *Hi no Tori*, *Susano-o* is recast as the brother and second-in-command of *Queen Himiko*, a shaman queen who rules through her spells and divinations. This is entirely in line with the first recorded mention of early Japan, an entry in a Chinese sea captain's log in which he describes the kingdom of *Yamatai* and its queen. He recorded that *Himiko* lived alone, attended by a thousand women and one man. Tezuka took advantage of the fact that the Chinese captain had not named the man or specified his relationship to *Himiko*. By simply making that man her brother and naming him *Susano-o*, Tezuka tied the semi-historical figure of *Himiko* to *Amaterasu*, the sun goddess.

And Tezuka's *Himiko* lives out the myth of the fight with *Susano-o* that led *Amaterasu* to confine herself in a cave. *Susano-o* comes off a bit better in Tezuka's version than he did in the original Shinto myth where his actions were mostly unprovoked and irrational. In *Hi no Tori*, he is often a lone voice of reason in *Himiko*'s

TONI- CHAN EXPLAINS IT ALL

By Antonia Levi

irrational court. He is never actually disloyal to his sister, but he resents her domination and questions both her supposed magical powers and her political judgment. Most of the time, he has a point. *Himiko* is a charlatan obsessed with achieving immortality by drinking the phoenix's blood. She is also a ruthless despot, willing to kill her own people as well as those of the countries she invades. At one point, Tezuka dresses her anachronistically in a Nazi uniform, a Mao jacket and a Napoleon hat. *Himiko*, a.k.a. *Amaterasu*, doesn't get much respect from Japan's god of manga.

That's not surprising. Tezuka grew up in the 1930s when Shinto myths were used as propaganda for a dictatorship that ruled in the name of an emperor divinely descended from the *Amaterasu*. The sun goddess myth was rammed down young Tezuka's throat in mandatory ethics classes throughout his school years. In the name of that myth, Tezuka was drafted into a war he hated but could do nothing about. When the war ended in the nuclear clouds of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he learned about the atrocities that had been perpetrated on other nations and on Japanese citizens, all in the name of *Amaterasu* and her divine descendant, the Japanese emperor.

Small wonder that *Himiko* a.k.a. *Amaterasu* gets such bad press from Tezuka. It's amazing that he retained any love for his mythic heritage at all. However, *Himiko's* loss is *Susano-o's* gain in *Hi no Tori*. *Susano-o* does eventually get drunk and goes on a fairly pointless rampage, but by that time, the audience can sympathize

with his frustration and anger. And his most senseless act, hurling a flayed colt [in *Hi no Tori*, it's actually a dead bull because the introduction of horses to Japan is a major subplot and *Himiko* doesn't have any yet] into *Himiko's* chambers, is given some sort of rationale as he taunts his arrogant sister with a challenge: "If you're really a god, revive this bull!" Naturally she can't, and naturally that annoys her. So she has *Susano-o's* eyes burned out with

molten lead and banishes him from her kingdom. As he staggers off to roam the world as a blind man, he is undoubtedly a lord of darkness, but still a sympathetic figure.

That's not the case in *The Dark Myth*, which also draws on *Susano-o's* legend. When David Won reviewed *The Dark Myth* for Animeco, he suggested Manga Entertainment should add a warning: "Knowledge of Buddhism Required." Mr. Won is right, but he didn't go far enough. *The Dark Myth* also requires a knowledge of Shinto, Hinduism and western astrology, and even then, a lot of it remains obscure.

Anime's mix-and-match approach to religion may be confusing for Americans, but it's natural in Japan and, for that matter, in most of East Asia, where new religions are routinely absorbed into existing beliefs. When Buddhism first came to Japan, monks argued that Buddhist saints were simply different manifestations of existing Shinto deities, thus avoiding religious warfare. And the practice continues. Most of Japan's new religions mix existing beliefs with newer arrivals such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam or Hinduism. Aum Shin Rikyo, the sect that dropped nerve gas down the Tokyo subway, is the most notorious example, but most new mixes are harmless. With that tradition behind them, it's small wonder that Japanese cartoonists find it natural and convenient to mix religions in the creation of their fantasy worlds.

The Dark Myth begins with a straightforward account of *Susano-o's* rampage and his subsequent banishment drawn directly from the ancient texts. His battle with the dragon, however, is changed.

In *The Dark Myth*, it takes place in the underworld, and there is no mention of a damsel in distress or any other mitigating factors that might show him in a more positive light. *Susano-o* simply slays a dragon for no reason and becomes the lord of darkness.

Like *Hi no Tori*, *The Dark Myth* assumes that the gods really did exist in an ancient time. That time, however, is not 2nd century Japan, but the *Jomon* era

(4500 B.C.E.-250 B.C.E.), and the gods are supernatural monsters who actually look a lot like the clay figures found on *Jomon* sites. *Himiko* does get into the story, but only as a flashback, in which she is presented as a priestess of *Susano-o* who tried and failed to control his destructive power. The nature of that power, *Susano-o's* true form, is shrouded in mystery until the end of *The Dark Myth*...and possibly even after the end. There is never, however, any question that his coming threatens humanity. In *The Dark Myth*, *Susano-o* is definitely a bad guy.

The good guy...sorta...is Takahashi, a modern day teen who is actually the reincarnation of *Yamato Takeru*, a more mortal Shinto hero. Takahashi is told of his earlier life by the Hindu god of the universe, Brahman. Brahman also tells him that he must become *Atman* and save the world from the return of *Susano-o*. In Hinduism, *Atman* is the part of each individual soul that carries within it full and perfect knowledge of the nature of the universe, or Brahman. Taoism and Zen are based on a similar concept; this is the reason a person can understand the universe by looking within, by meditating. *The Dark Myth's* contention that only one preordained person, in this case Takahashi, can become *Atman* actually goes against the original belief that all people carry the potential for goodness within them.

Be that as it may, in *The Dark Myth*, only Takahashi can save the world from the power of *Susano-o*, whatever that is. *Susano-o* doesn't appear until the end, but he is represented by the symbol of the horse, presumably the colt he flayed and cast into *Amaterasu's* chambers. That seems an odd symbol. The ancient texts do not record what the colt thought about *Susano-o's* action, but one suspects it did not meet with the beast's approval. Nonetheless, in *The Dark Myth* *Susano-o* is identified with his equine victim, an identification that allows the artist to link him to two other horsey deities: *Rahu* and *Kannon*.

Neither identification is really a perfect fit. *Kannon*, the Buddhist god or goddess of mercy, is difficult to relate to a destructive *Susano-o* except in appearance and even that's not consistent. *Kannon* is worshipped as a man in India, as a woman in China, and in 33 ambisexual manifestations in Japan. The horse-headed

...Similarly, *Susano-o* is no Satan. He might be wild, but he could also be kind, and sometimes downright heroic...

manifestation which appears in **The Dark Myth** is usually male and looks fearsome, but looks can be deceiving. The horse-headed **Kannon** is a good guy who roams the world fighting evil and ignorance. He also protects people from being reborn on a lower plane, as animals. He does not serve gods of darkness or go around biting Japanese teens.

Rahu, on the other hand, is a Hindu demon who might well join with **The Dark Myth**'s version of **Susano-o**. **Rahu** does not manifest as a horse, but he does drive a chariot drawn by eight black, "night-cold" steeds. **Rahu** originally had a dragon's head and a tail like a comet. That changed when he angered the gods by sneaking a drink of soma, the elixir of immortality. The god Vishnu punished him for this by cutting off his head. **Rahu**'s body died, but his head was already immortal and it rose up in the sky where it causes eclipses by eating the sun and moon whenever it gets hungry. There is obviously some similarity here with another victim of **Susano-o**, the eight-headed

dragon, but **The Dark Myth** doesn't elaborate on it.

There are, however, frequent references to three objects usually associated with **Susano-o** and **Amaterasu**. These are the lost sacred treasures of Japan: the sword (courage), the mirror (purity), and the jewel (benevolence). Mythically speaking, the mirror and the jewel are **Amaterasu**'s; the sword is the one **Susano-o** found in the dragon's tail. Historically speaking, all three items represented advanced technological methods available only through trade with China. They were probably prized status symbols for Japan's prehistoric elite. **The Dark Myth** suggests this by adding a gold Chinese seal to its mix. These seals were designed to be used in diplomacy and trade, but the seal in **The Dark Myth** also has magical powers. **Hi no Tori** also features a Chinese seal, but there it is a symbol of the abuse of power and is used as a murder weapon before getting ignominiously trampled into the mud by invading cavalry.

The sacred treasure most used in

anime is undoubtedly the jewel, usually depicted as a comma-shaped stone with a hole in the middle. Again, this is not something dreamed up by Japanese cartoonists. Archeologists regularly find these jewels called **magatama** in sites dating from the 1st to the 5th centuries. **Magatama** are usually carved from jade or cornelian, and are believed to have been worn as a symbol of rank by tribal rulers. In **Hi no Tori**, **Himiko** wears an entire headband of **magatama**. In **The Dark Myth**, **Takahashi**'s mother keeps a string of them as her family heirloom. And, of course, they are the blue seeds in **Blue Seed**.

Blue Seed is also an anime based on **Susano-o**'s story, mostly his victory over the eight-headed dragon, although caves do get into it too. **Blue Seed** takes place in a contemporary, possibly futuristic, setting in which the story is starting to play out again. The dragon is back as a sentient form of plant life called the **aragami**. **Princess Kushinada** is back too, in duplicate, as **Momiji** and her older twin sister,

continued, p 35

WHAT'S THIS? by Eric Kihara

A guide to Japanese Animation Society of Hawai'i's Programming

Merry Christmas JASHerS! It's Christmas time again (not that we have any hope of it being a white one...) and I'm looking forward to the Christmas party! Hope to see a lot of you there (more fodder for my Anime Jeopardy game). As for what's coming up, it's going to be a real short list due to the party but that's okay. Here goes....

Cats Eye

More episodes from the popular series based on the manga of Tsukasa Hojo. Three sisters are stealing artwork which holds the key to finding their father. To make matters worse, one of the sisters is in love with a policeman who has sworn to catch the infamous thieves.

Irresponsible Captain Tylor

More adventures from the Soyokaze and her most unique crew.

DNA²

The final episodes of the series explains all about why Karin kept getting the wrong bullets and whose decision it was to make this mission in the first place. I can't say too much more because the story would be spoiled, but if you liked any part of this series these episodes are a must-see.

Marmalade Boy

A few of my favorites, these episodes are about Miki having to deal with her old feelings for Ginta and her new feelings for Yuu. On top of that, we get to learn a little about Miki's friend Meiko.

Votoms

In this story of a far future world, a young soldier is caught between sides of a massive conspiracy and he must struggle to stay alive while trying to find

the one woman who could be the key to solving the whole mystery. As a side note, it's nice to see Anime this old (well over 10 years) so clean. It's a real treat for the eyes.

November

Cat's Eye
My Youth in Arcadia
Irresponsible Captain Tylor
DNA²
Voltes V

December

Christmas Party

January

Marmalade Boy
Votoms
DNA²
Irresponsible Captain Tylor

PROJECT A-KON #8

PART TWO

by Roger O'Connor
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Day Two - Part Two

I found some friends of mine and then stepped into the costume contest line with them. I'm glad that I had somebody to talk to while I waited, because it was almost a full hour before the contest was to

every mispronunciation in unison. It ended up being quite funny waiting to hear how he would mess up the next character's name, and then hearing the audience yell the correct way all at once.

Some of the acts were really quite good, also. There was a singing Ryoga, who sang a really funny rewording of the

Kermit song, "The Rainbow Connection." I can still remember some of the lyrics, "Someday I'll find it, my sense of direction..."

The cute girl quotient was quite high. There were even three different Lums! I al-

start. While we were waiting in line, we almost decided to blow the contest off and go get something to eat. I'm glad we didn't.

I go to a lot of anime cons, and have for almost a decade. I have probably seen at least half of the Anime costume contests put on in this country. Of those, this was definitely in the top ten percent. I won't say it was the best, but it was pretty damn good.

After thinking back on the event, I'd have to say that the best part of the contest was the audience. Everybody seemed to be having a simply wonderful time. All of the Cosplayers' jokes were laughed at, or if they were really bad, a good natured moan was the response. There was little or no heckling from the audience, and what little there was almost seemed to be a part of the act.

One thing that could have been a bad situation, was the emcee for the show. He didn't have much familiarity with anime and did not know how to pronounce any of the Japanese names from the shows. This bad situation was turned into a big joke though, as the audience would correct his

Scott Frazier (of Studio I.G.) for her cuteness. The other received the Judge's Award from Steve Bennett for her "cuteness." The two judges seemed to disagree on their definition of the word, but there was no doubt that most people agreed that these girls were worthy of some serious attention.

The Grand Prize winner of the contest was something that had to be seen to be believed. And now that I think about it, it kind of puts the weekend into focus and explains a great deal about the entire attitude of the people attending this convention.

Imagine if you will, a stage. On that stage is an announcer, looking around as if he's not exactly sure what to do next. Then a scream erupts from the far right. A girl dressed in a tiger-striped bikini comes running across the stage, yelling and bouncing so much that she has to hold her top up with both hands. She turns to look behind her and screams again. The



ways say, you can never have too many Lums. One of them sang the title song from the UY series, with subtitles. The subtitles were provided by a group of guys holding placards up with the English on them. I figured them as "fan subtitles" though, because the subtitles never really matched up with the Japanese.

The other two Lums were very cute. One, played by Elin Winkler (of Radio Comics) received the Judge's Award from



announcer finishes announcing the next contestant.

"The Overfiend," he says. "From Legend of the Overfiend." A thing runs up on the stage. Underneath all of the long multicolored balloons, twisted and curved into insidious shapes, you see a man dressed entirely in black, with a hood over his head. The hood is probably a good thing, you think. The audience has absolutely broken out into hysterics.

I, myself, have never laughed so hard. I think I hit the poor guy sitting next to me on the back a few times without knowing it. I couldn't stop laughing for a full minute.

The fact that a big, black, balloon covered jokester, who ran around playing with his balloons in a suggestive manner won the costume contest should tell you a great deal about Project A-Kon. The fact that, after he received his prize, two of the female contestants ran up on stage with straight pins and popped each and every one of those balloons, should tell you even more.

Later that night, after dancing for hours on the absolutely packed and rocking dance floor of the con dance, I found my way home, sure that the next day could not bring any more surprises.

Day Three

I didn't arrive on Sunday until afternoon sometime. I guess that I'm not as young as I used to be and after getting to bed at three in the morning... Even though it was after twelve o'clock, things were quite a bit slower than the day before. I guess that's normal for the Sunday of a three day con, but I was surprised to see it happen at this con.

I used the time to view some more anime in the video room until I heard dis-



cussion in the hall about somebody having a wedding. I asked around and sure enough some of the con attendees were having a wedding in the main ballroom downstairs. I shook my head in disbelief. An anime wedding, huh? That's just a bit too much for me. I went back to the video room to watch some

more *Escaflowne*.

After a while my butt started hurting, so I got up to walk around and see if anything else weird was happening. When I walked by the room where the costume contest had been held, I saw some guys up on stage wearing black tee shirts and holding what looked like suped-up paint pellet guns. They dimmed the lights and a guy squeezed off four or five rapid fire rounds and shot a steel plate that two other guys were holding. Sparks flew and I felt a strong urge to duck under the chairs in front of me. Then everybody started applauding and the guy who did the shooting started explaining about the rounds he was using and about all the other stuff on stage. These were apparently some movie/TV special effects guys. Good thing somebody told me.

After that little show, I was pretty much resigned to the fact that anything could happen at a Project A-Kon. I had had a wonderful time at the convention and had seen about as much anime as a person can stand in a 72 hour period. I had seen live action anime girls and guns and gunfire (or a close approximation).

It had been a good time, I thought to myself as I walked out to my car for the last time. My thoughts were interrupted as a guy came running up to me in the parking garage. He slowed down and looked around suspiciously, then he pointed this big Nerf™ rocket cannon gun thing that he was carrying at me.

"Cool, huh?" he said. Then he fired it right at me. "And see, it doesn't even hurt!"

That's A-Kon for you.



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But We

Wen: Hi-yo! Wen-san and C^2 here with yet another edition of BWD (look at the column title) the only thing in Animeco that rates lower than the 'What's This' column. ^_^; That is, according to the online poll at Limelight Publishing's web site at: <http://planet-hawaii.com/lime>. If anyone out there likes this column by all means vote for us before the publisher drops us!

C^2: Boy, we're dead last? At least we've got nowhere to go but up. ^_^; Maybe we should change the column title into something more exciting, like HOT SEXXX HERE!!! to get some attention. ^_^ Ok, maybe not. ^_^

Or how about a new column title, "Cat's Eye Cafe"? Heard through the grapevine that the new live-action "Cat's Eye" (based on Tsukasa Hojo's manga and anime series about three sisters/thieves who run a cafe as their day jobs) has recently been released in Japan. Soundtrack CDs done by Anri are available in Iwase on Young Street.

I'm so inspired ^_^ But I guess naming this column after their cafe would be too much of a non-sequitur... ^_^

Wen: This is something Lea Hernandez turned me onto via a post on Genie. Here's an introduction: Reverse Speech is a discovery, made by Australian Researcher David John Oates, of a new form of communication that has the ability to uncover a deeper truth and meaning behind what we are actually speaking. As we speak consciously, the brain is generating messages arising from the unconscious. These messages occur every 10 to 15 seconds and can be heard by simply playing a recording of normal speech in reverse.

C^2: You're kidding. That's pretty scary — it's like what they used to say about heavy metal played backwards revealing satanic messages. ^_^; Do I really want to know what evil messages are lurking in the minds of mankind? Eew... eww... I have a feeling you're going to tell us whether I like it or not. I'll just go off into some corner and cover my pristine ears while you do that. ^_^

Wen: Eh? Well anyway, what's this got to do with anime?

Well, one person turned in a reverse speech recording of one of the Sailor Moon songs (the one that play when Sailor Moon going to fight the evil queen). Here are some excerpts from that:

Here is a song I found and played backwards and found the following. But somehow I keep thinking either 1: this song has been back masked, or 2: The people who sang this song had a lot on their mind. Here is the transcript of that song.

"GIVE ME THE STRENGTH" - By Sailor Moon (Wen: actually the title is CARRY ON written by Michael Benghiat, John Miyagi Author, & Andy Heyward with Vocals by Jennifer Cihl)

Played Backwards. [Note: Brackets means it was Heard In Reverse]

Here I'm standing in the night.
["Yeah love means nothing, yes Terri"]
(Wen: Terri Hawkes plays the voice of Sailor Moon in the North American version)

My crescent wand...the only light.
["Hal-al-you-ya"]

A job that meets the power I need.
["Team in a while I'll team apart"]

Evil queen we will defeat.
["Here is where we mutiny"]

With all our strength the battle's won.
["I would have a kiss, yes not of you"]

We have the strength to carry on.
["Here I am. And I'm still mad at you"]

Tom
Las Vegas, NV.

Wen: Want to hear the whole thing? You'll need a web browser that supports the REAL AUDIO format. When you get that, tune your browser to: <http://www.reversespeech.com/reversal.htm> and do a search for Sailor Moon (it's a long page).

C^2: Uh... I couldn't help but overhear that Sailor Moon reverse ditty... arg! How wierd. Seems like the singer's caught in a chaotic love-hate relationship. I guess that fits; chaotic love-hate is the stuff shojo animes and soap

Digress

Christina Chun

ANIME AND THE INTERNET

operas are made of... ^_^;

And when we're talking relationships (as I neatly segue into this topic — I'm so cool :P :), is it just me, or was August the month of chaotic destruction? Man, talk about everyone around me falling apart or going crazy for one reason or another. Stress, family problems, lots of people getting sick with colds or worse, friends going ballistic and suddenly hating one another. (I had all of that happen to me recently.) Was it just me or did all kinds of crap just happen to do the vOlCaNiC ExPuLSiOn back then?

I asked some people and it seems like this August Pandora's Box Opening was infectious, i.e. they noticed it too. Then I heard something about a major Witches' Sabbath coming up, whatever that means. [Eds. note: October 31st = Samhain...on a new moon...hm...] Don't think I asked you yet, Wen — anything unusually bad happen to you in August?

And if any of our (few) readers would like to comment on this, hey, feel free to send a note to us, care of Animeco. But I digress. ^_^;

Wen: Well, other than being out of work for 2 weeks and then having to get used to totally new working hours and my car breaking down majorly twice this summer, nothing really... ^_^;;

In other news, after sitting on the back burner for nearly 5 years:

Category 14, Topic 5
Message 842 Tue Aug 26, 1997
STUDIO.MG [Goddess] at 14:52 EDT

More or less quoted from the official press release:

CATHEDRAL CHILD, by acclaimed manga creator Lea Hernandez, will be published as a complete-in-one-volume digest-sized book.

The release date will be sometime in March, CC will be released by Shadowline/Image Comics.

C^2: So, what's CATHEDRAL CHILD all about? You've got

pretty good taste in manga, Wen. Guess that means I've got to go pick this one up. ^_^

Wen: Well, before these comics get too moldy sitting around waiting to get reviewed, I thought I'd list them here in different categories (full review to follow when I can get around to it):

1. GET THEM NOW! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!

Super Information Hijinks: Reality Check! [Sirius] - Tavi & Rikki are cool people and so is this comic! Check out what happens when Collin's cat, Catreece gets into Cyberspace!

C^2: Yes, please do buy this comic. Tavi and Rikki are friends of mine and I'm sure they'd greatly appreciate y'all buying their (excellent, fun) stories. *plug!plug!* They're not even paying me to say that. ^_^

Wen: *Astonishing Excitement* [All Jonh Comics] - Zany manga style anthology comic from Canada! (hm, I've just found All Jonh has gone out of business, you should still be able to get back issues from your local comics shop though)

C^2: Ok, I have to admit I haven't been reading much manga lately, so I won't be able to add my two aluminum yen here... you go, Wendell. Rah, rah! ^_^

Wen: *GON* [Paradox Press] - Cool manga about a Super Deformed t-rex and, you can't complain about the translation since all the stories are told without words!

The Amazing Adventures of Professor Jones [Antartic Press] - It's by the same artist who did the infamous "Star Trekker" comic that got Antarctic Press into hot water with those lawyers at Paramount a few years ago.

2. COOL READS

Danger Girls [Castle Graphics] - Of all the Dirty Pair clone rips offs I've seen, I like this one the best. It's sort of how I wish the actual Dirty Pair comic turned out...

MixxZine [Mixx Publications] -Two gripes: 1. Awful cover! The anime ads inside look much nicer. The cover designer has a strange sense of, well, design. Just to make sure, I checked out this guys web page and sure enough, its just as weird as the cover. 2. All of the stories are cool, but what's the idea sticking kiddy stories with the mature themed ones in the same magazine? Mixx(ed up)Zine is well named I guess...

Helter Skelter [Antarctic Press] -Well named book. I've only read the 1st issue so far, but from what I see HS is a lot more original than some of the other teenage manga comedies out there.

3. WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Chelsea Mascott [Newcomers Publishing] -Chelsea is a goddess... but she doesn't know it yet... Shows a lot of promise but, I don't know why some people think having your characters 'shack up' makes your comic more 'adult' or something. That, and I don't know why the cover price is \$2.95 when it comes with a black & white cover.

Noble A.R.M.O.U.R. Halberder [Academy Comics] -I liked this stuff from the Waltrip Bros., better than I did their Robotech stuff, which kind of bored me. Nice Gundam-like story line with a touch of Legend of Galactic Heroes, along with their own twists, keeps this one interesting to me. I figure this one didn't sell well since it wasn't Robotech, and Waltrips don't have much of a name outside of that...

Druid Warrior Grace [Brainstorm Comics] -Sort of a Xena with supernatural powers, done manga-style. What can I say? I'm a sucker for stories like this.

Tech High [Virtually Real Enterprises] -What better than to have high school stories done by high schoolers themselves? I especially liked the 'Con Season' story since I could see myself doing the same things! Lots of potential but still needs a lot of work before any these artists reach 'Pro' level. [Note: Just found issue #3! Now I have to track down #2...]

Eh... Ran a bit long on that one... ^_^;

C^2: Uh... yes. Phew. You've been busy ransacking the comic store shelves! Me, all I can talk about right now is the Final Fantasy 7 RPG for the Playstation™— but by the time this mag gets out, that'll be old news. As long as we're talking about comics, however, here's something off rec.arts.anime.info about the latest (at the time of this writing) Superman-ish:

Interesting thing I noticed in the newest superman comic...

There is a most unprecedented cameo in the supes comic: namely ranma 1/2's genma and ryoga in cursed form appears in Superman #548 on page 20 in a wall scroll, are superman and lois otakus or just the artists involved? I was curious since DC's decision to have an anime project or two like the recent dc titans one where adam warren did his own take on a 80th century titans leads me to believe dc may be going the route of anime.

Until Bizarro shampoo rants at ranma in perfect colloquial english and lobo wrecks ranma and akane's wedding, make mine raail!

charles duncan
halifax@ies.net

Wonder how many other "anime sightings" we can pick out of mainstream American comics these days — think we should try? ^_^;

Wen: With my money situation I'm not even going to try... ^_^;;
However, if any of you out there sees one, drop us a line, ne?

C^2: Finally, here's a .sig sighted on the Net that I found way amusing.

Pursuant to US Code, Title 47, Chapter 5, Subchapter II, DF227, any and all unsolicited commercial E-mail sent to this address is subject to a download and archival fee in the amount of \$500 US. E-mailing denotes acceptance of these terms.

—Thomas E. Cardwell II (shampoo@earthlink.net,
ranma@anime.usacomputer.net)

He apparently gets a lot of junk email. Come to think of it, I've been getting proportionately more and more junk unsolicited email every day, a lot of it from people trying to sell "get rich quick" schemes. That goes straight into the delete file. Wish there was a way to efficiently kill any email that tries to sell me something I didn't ask for.

Wen: There are e-mail programs that come with filters you can use strain junk like that out. However, think how rich you could be if you could get those guys to pay you for every unwanted e-mail you got. With the amount of junk I get, I could probably retire in a month just like those spam-o-grams promise. <Insert Evil Grin here>

C^2: *laugh* Me too. And I'd retire to... Hawai'i! *wheel* Oh wait, I'm already in Hawai'i. =P Oh well, guess it's time to sign off and dream about a comfortable retirement. Shyeah, in about 40 years ^_^;; See ya next time, Wendell 'n' everybody! ^_^

From: charles duncan <halifax@ies.net>
Subject: Re: Ranma 1/2 wall scroll appearance in Adventures of Superman #548
Date: 9 Jun 1997 16:44:36 -0400

Note: The backgrounds are a sneak peek at some of the character designs from the up coming White Rad-ish feature of 'The Apprentice'! -wen





There is a place on the World
Wide Web where you can find all
the dojinshi, videos, "hentai"
role playing games, and hard-to-
find Japanese CD ROMs, videos,
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OTAKULAND

Strolling Down Orange Road, Part 1

By K.J. "Keiji" Karvonen with Naruto "Nick" Nishizawa.

Thanks to Peter Payne for his **Shin Kimagure Orange Road** translation.

of cool Science Fiction unavailable otherwise, like **DR.WHO**, **BLAKES 7** and **RED DWARF**. Recently lots of people have been asking for anime, so what did KTEH air? **ROBOTECH!** What a boobie prize!

terms reasonable so that KTEH could afford it. His whole aim: put subtitled Urusei Yatsura on the air!

Gradually, others jumped on the bandwagon: Clubs, **FANIMECON**, even some KTEH employees: Why NOT put subbed anime on PBS? Finally Sean got this letter:



Lum's Stormtroopers Blitzkrieg PBS

People who like bad dubbing always use the same argument:

You have to have dubs, because they just won't show subtitled anime on TV — and that's where the audience is.

Well, disregarding the fact that most of the anime that has made the US releasing companies solvent HASN'T been shown on TV, the battle to get subtitled anime on TV seems insurmountable ...or maybe no one ever really tried.

Well, it is possible. Here in the San Francisco Bay Area, we have a pretty cool PBS station: KTEH Channel 54, in San Jose, California. Despite the dire predictions regarding budget cuts at the national level, what has happened here is that local PBS stations have had to become more responsive to their audiences because they are now more dependent on them for their funding. Since there is a large fan community here in the Bay Area, this means KTEH has been showing lots

Somehow, this didn't make most of the fans happy, even though the feedback from the clubs was, "Well, it's better than nothing". They didn't seem to think they could do any better. There was one person who wasn't willing to give up, though: Sean Worsham.

Like myself, Sean is an avid **URUSEI YATSURA** fan, and he wasn't going to accept reruns of **ROBOTECH**. He wanted the real stuff, subtitled. I didn't believe he could do it, but I urged him to try anyway, and helped him a bit here and there-and so did others, like Mahmoud Mahmoud and Mason Proulx. Mason has a definitive Urusei Yatsura web site of his own called **TOMOBKI-CHO** (<http://www.ottawa.net/~proulx/uy/uyhome.htm>). A great website, which you can see by the articles he saw fit to quote.

So Sean started a website of his own, **LUM'S STORM TROOPERS UNITE!** (<http://users.ccnet.com/~gdb/lum.htm>). He made flyers, he wrote letters. He even wrote to Robert Woodhead (president of **ANIMEIGO**) and urged him to make his

"Sean...just to keep you up to date on our efforts around U.Y.

We are currently trying to obtain rights to the first few programs for preview purposes to give our viewers a chance to see U.Y. and respond. We understand the series will be subtitled. Thank you for your continued patience and support.

*Sincerely,
Laura C. Gidding
Viewer Services
Associate
KTEH CHANNEL 54"*

Even though KTEH have announced their intention of airing **URUSEI YATSURA**, Sean continues his campaign. He wants you all to keep pledging to KTEH and requesting more subtitled anime.

Even though lots of people helped, Sean led the way to getting real anime on the air, when no one else believed. When **URUSEI YATSURA** hits the airwaves, KTEH, Animeigo, and all of the rest of us have him to thank for it.

OOPS! Dere It Is!

Sharp eyed E. Bernhard Warg noticed something in my last column-the one where I demonstrated how embarrassing it can be to have written a book about a subject one knows nothing about (**SAMURAI FROM OUTER SPACE**). He found a mistake. Shucks, darn, and so on.

"The name of the maternal heroine in



Hi, Mom! Mater: Not a 'Borg.

© TOEI Animation

Galaxy Express 999 is not "Metal," nor is it derived from "metal"... Matsumoto himself said (in *Animag#6*, and probably elsewhere) that the name was derived from the Latin "mater," meaning (appropriately enough) "mother."

OOPS! What I did here, Bern, is confuse two different Matsumoto works that I saw in Japanese over ten years ago: I went and confused "Mater" with Queen Emeraldas' sidekick. Of course, since the character's name is **MATER**, not **MAYTEL**, Levi is STILL wrong. Besides, it's not like that's the only character name Antonia got wrong-substitute your favorite!

Sorry about that: I didn't have time to check that one out before it was printed, because the deadline was upon me. Considering that I've written quite a few articles, and this is only the second error I've



had pointed out, that's not a bad record!

Rocky Road

KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD, or **KOR**, as its fans call it, is a classic manga, an anime, blending first love, science fiction, and comedy in a way that its fans find irresistible. Essentially, it is the story of the romantic entanglement of a 16 year old boy named **Kyosuke Katsuga** and two girls, **Hikaru Hayama** and **Madoka Ayukawa** with the added complication that Kyosuke and his family have incredible psychic powers! Inherited from Kyosuke's mother's family, and called "the Power" in the manga, these abilities range in type throughout the Katsuga family. Kyosuke's ability is relatively erratic, whereas his twin sisters Kurumi and Manami have them very strongly: it's an effort for them to STOP using them!

A trademark of Matsumoto's **KOR** is the use of the visual metaphor to symbolize subtle emotional states. For example, on page 83 in volume 10 of the wideban (hardcover volume), Hikaru offers her umbrella to Kyosuke. In Japan, "under one umbrella" is a slang way of representing the boyfriend-girlfriend relationship. So Hikaru is trying to get Kyosuke 'under the same umbrella' with her. Meanwhile, Madoka intentionally chooses to walk home by herself, in the rain — alone. The often heart-twisting romance comes from the fact that Hikaru wants Kyosuke, Kyosuke wants Madoka, and Madoka wants her best friend Hikaru's happiness even at the expense of her own.

Considering the power of his story, you can tell that its creator will always be remembered for the love his work has inspired — and I'm sure the rest of you like him too! So I was really excited when during my last trip to Tokyo, Mr. Matsumoto invited me to his studio to talk about his work and his new project, a CD-ROM comic anthology called **COMIC ON**.

At home with Matsumoto

It was august in Tokyo, hot and swel-

tering, as August always is in Tokyo. The heat and humidity always reminds me of San Diego, California. The cicadas were out, that metaphor of summer in Japan; perhaps you might remember these big insects and their rasping buzz from your favorite anime.

Well, it's not as picturesque as it seems. You see, one thing that doesn't come across in anime is those darn bugs are LOUD! Having one fifteen feet away is like having someone blow a duck whistle in your ear! Also, they're never alone: I found out why there are always so many benches empty in Yoyogi park in august: the trees swarm with cicadas, and the noise is like demonstration day at a chainsaw convention.

When I arrived at Mr. Matsumoto's address with Nick, who had taken time off from work to supplement my broken Japanese, I noticed that it took up a lot of space

in an impressive (by Japanese standards) apartment building. He mused that perhaps Mr. Matsumoto owned the whole building! We were shown into the studio by Mr. Matsumoto's attractive assistant, a large suite of rooms that included a shoji screened tatami mat room for en-



©1996 Genesis DPC/Toshiba

tertaining guests. She then served us very strong iced coffee, which was a surprise: I had become used to the traditional Japanese cooler, cold grain tea.

Method to his Manga

Mr. Matsumoto showed us his art production area, and he was very proud of his collection of Macintosh computers, including his newest acquisition, a Power PC 6100. This was apparently the most powerful Mac model available in Japan at that time. Actually, every manga professional I met in Japan either had a Mac or was planning to buy one: They were fascinated by the possibilities presented by

the Mac's high quality print graphics capabilities. He was most interested by my mention that I had been doing computer assisted manga, and we spent the better part of the first hour discussing methodology and software. I asked him if he was using the Mac to help him produce comic on, his new CD-ROM Manga Anthology: "For **COMIC ON**, you are doing a new **ORANGE ROAD** story, using the Macintosh to produce the art?"

"I'm drawing the art on paper first," Mr. Matsumoto replied, "and then scanning it into the computer for retouching. I use Photoshop and live pictures."

I asked him if he was familiar with **COLOR IT**, which is a photo retouch program that has paint capabilities. Matsumoto-sensei said he hadn't: apparently, high quality graphics production software is somewhat limited in Japan. He mentioned his version of Photoshop, which was three versions behind my own; and he hadn't heard of some of the more specialized products and plug ins. He was also very interested in my printer: a 600dpi postscript printer I use to output **MAGICAL PRINCESS SACCARINE**. [Eds. note: See *Legion Anthology* review, p.34.] At one point, I asked him if he had considered the PC platform, but I got the familiar reply: the quality of the print output on the

PC was just not suitable for professional use!

To be Continued

As a **KOR** fan, I was very interested in the **COMIC ON** continuation of **ORANGE ROAD**, so I asked "Will the art style look different from the original, considering that you're doing this computer assisted?" He answered "It's more of a colored, rendered looking style."

I asked him if he seen some of the American comics that are being done this way? He said that he hadn't, because in Japan it was only being done this way for CD ROMS, not printed comics. I told him that American printers can now accept comics submitted directly on disc, and they do the printing directly from the disc images.

Not Shin

Many fans are familiar with the novel written by Matsumoto Izumi, and Kenji Terada in 1994, **SHIN KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD**. For those not familiar with it, the story of **SHIN** involves the familiar 'time travel using the ESP power' accident, which propels Kyosuke three years into his own future. Kyosuke finds out about the future selves of all his friends: His roman-

tic relationship with Madoka had solidified, Hikaru has grown up and become a dancer, and he himself has followed in his father's footsteps into the profession of photography. I had assumed that Matsumoto-sensei would be continuing the story from that novelization.

"No, I'm going to continue from the 150th story I did in 1987. It's continuing the original Manga from where it left off," said Mr. Matsumoto. "This will be number 151 and so on. According to Masumoto, they also won't be based on the new OAV's: "the new **ORANGE ROAD** OAV's were created by the animation staff as well as myself, so they aren't the original concept for **ORANGE ROAD**. These stories are based on the original stories."

Same MAT Time, Same MAT Channel

Subtitled tapes of the **KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD** OAV's and Movie are available currently from **ANIMEIGO**. **ANIMEIGO** hopes to bring the **KOR** TV series to you in the near future. Coming up next time: Part 2 of an enlightening discussion with the one and only Izumi Matsumoto, creator of **ORANGE ROAD**. Join us again next issue-or face 'The Pick'!



Subject: **Alternate Universe Anime Club**
Date: Fri., 26 Sep 1997 08:20:38 -0700

Greetings;

Just a quick note on what our club will be showing this week,

1. Mobile Battle Pastry Nabisco

This is the story of Alphonse, a gourmet pastry chef working as a lowly fighter pilot on a space cruiser which is shaped, and flavored, like a gigantic lemon Pop Tart™. The captain, who is sort of an anime version of Betty Crocker™, is a tactical genius when it comes to cooking, and she'll need to be as her ship meets the evil Sushians in an pangalactic food fight. Bring your own toothpaste to this one!

2. Princess Minniemouse

Since the Walt Disney Corp is distributing Hayao Miyazaki's pictures in the U.S., it was decided by the Animation Department management that what his latest picture **REALLY** needed was a few Broadway musical-

type numbers to spice it up a bit, for the home audience. Those who have seen this sneak preview of the extra footage claim that the "rumba" number is a laugh riot. A must see! Oh, one note, after viewing the new version, Miyazaki claimed that he would never do another feature-length anime. Oh sure, we've heard that before!

3. Sensible Maison Ikkoku

After locking up the other residents in a closet, Godai-san goes to Kanrinin-san and tells her he loves her, then asks her to marry him. Impressed by his direct approach, she accepts. They encounter many complications on the way to getting married, but they meet each with common sense, determination and confidence. The series ends after one episode.

4. Tenchi Mutato, version 4.31, revision C.

This series has undergone so many basic plot changes, revisions and restarts that we now have absolutely no idea what the heck it's about. Fortunately, it has the sure-fire,

never-fail plot device of the "supremely dorky guy being chased by several hot looking babes", so who cares?

To get to our club, just fly past the first star on the right and go straight on till morning. See you there!

E.T.



Submitted For Your Discretion...

VIDEO

GALAXY EXPRESS 999: The Signature Edition



© 1997 Viz Video

They say you never forget your first anime girl.

It was the summer of 1980, and I was at a friend's house in Virginia. This friend had some of the "real stuff"—genuine Japanese animation. I was young, and I thought I knew things. I remembered *Gigantor* and *Prince Planet*; I faithfully watched *Star Blazers*; I even liked *Battle of the Planets*, which proves I *didn't* know everything. But I'd never seen raw anime before, and I knew I was in for a treat. I didn't expect to fall in love.

I watched this show about some lanky space pirate, with a ragged cape, a steely glare, and a really cool starship, who seemed to have two different sets of enemies—some humans on the ground, and some aliens in space, and I liked him. But the second show was different.

It was a movie, and it had this smart-aleck kid who was streetwise but still naïve; a planet of cruel poverty and great beauty; robots pretending they were people, and people who wished to be robots; that same space pirate I'd seen earlier, looking more buff but with the same steely glare. Only now, there was a female version of him, too. There was a cyborg who hunted humans, and a human (the kid) hunting the cyborg. There were wild worlds, desolate worlds, tenderness and death in fantastic places, and a spaceship disguised as a train, which tied them all together.

But most of all, there was *her*.

She dressed like a Russian countess, wearing a long black skirt, black cloak, and a black fur hat. Her figure was tall and willowy, and her golden hair fell past her knees. Her voice was soft and warm; and although I couldn't understand a word she said, I knew her personality was *also* soft and warm. She was more than that. She was as tough as Kei, as gentle as Belldandy, as fiercely protective as Priss, as sweet as Sailor Mercury—and she was around before any of them.

Her name was Maytel.

Galaxy Express 999 was released in the summer of 1978, just before the series began. Leiji Matsumoto's tale is a space fantasy, sure, but it's also an allegory for life itself. Using the archetypes of a woman and a boy that are so common in anime (especially Matsumoto's own), we see the universe through Tetsuro's eyes. It's a universe full of deprivation and longing and casual brutality. It's also a universe full of compassion and courage, and yes, love. The art is a refreshing change from the hyper-realistic styles seen these days; it's larger than life without being lifelike.

Many people claimed not to like the series, saying it was "too depressing", but *someone* liked it, because it ran 113 episodes over three years, and had a second movie as well as a couple of TV "specials". It came to the 'States in 1983, via Roger Corman. His version is legendary for its horrific dubbing (Captain Harlock as John Wayne!) and mangled continuity (over 40 minutes were cut). The Viz edition has done away with those sins; it's still dubbed, but it's *much* better. A subtitled edition is also available.

If you think anime started with *Tranzor Z*, it's time you learned your roots, and *Galaxy Express 999* is an essential lesson. If you remember the days when seeing *any* anime was a major event, come and remind yourself why you like this stuff in the first place.

— Milton Streeter



Adieu Galaxy Express 999



© 1981 Toei Animation

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For many of us, the lonely whistle of the train brings about a sense of inevitability. For some, it is a journey into a bright and better future, while others are reminded of past failures. For this island-raised boy, the whistle of the train brought memories of happy times in Lahaina, Maui. That was, until I saw the masterpiece done by Leiji Matsumoto. *Galaxy Express 999* had something for everyone: action, adventure, drama, and even mysteries. As much as I would love to have reviewed *Galaxy Express 999: The Signature Edition*, that honor was bestowed upon Milton Streeter, whom I felt would do it justice. I, however, will inform you, dear readers, of the second movie: *Adieu Galaxy Express 999*.

If there was ever a way to say goodbye to any well written series, this would be it. Leiji Matsumoto wrote a story that made you feel that you are saying farewell to good friends and leaves you feeling that maybe, just maybe, you'll meet them again someday. I cannot put to words how good this series is. Well, maybe I can sum up how much I liked the movie by saying this...

For those of you who know me and my feeling for dubbed tapes... I picked up the dubbed version by mistake. I didn't realize this until after I started watching it and you know what—for this tape only, I DIDN'T CARE!!

— Vid-Kid

Voltage Fighter Gowcaizer, episode 1



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Another example of video game-turned anime, this show is taken from the game of the same name. If you haven't seen the game, don't worry about it. The game never really got the press and notice it deserved and was hard to find even on the best of days. On the upside it was a rather challenging game with some, er, interesting characters. The weakest point of the game was its lack of story. The only way to truly find any story was to actually beat the game and watch the endings.

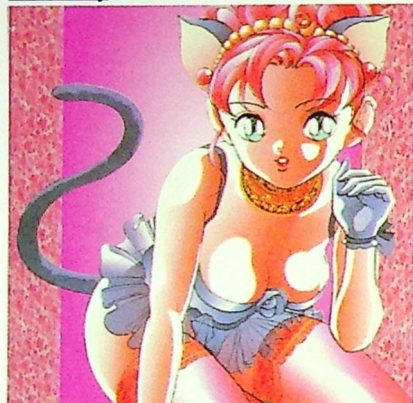
This video takes much of those endings into account and attempts to explain the story. I'm afraid that I can't speak for the accuracy in the storyline as I've only seen two character endings, and neither character appears in this first episode. The basic storyline is about a group of students who attend a special and mysterious school. All the students share some common traits, such as unusually strong fighting skills and a strong tendency toward exhibitionism (which fits the game pretty well). The purpose of the school is to recruit the most powerful fighters for some mysterious reason.

The animation quality is good (if you go for this art style—a la *Fatal Fury*) and the dubbing is fairly decent (although it takes some getting used to). Also of note is the appearance of Apollo Smile as one of the voice actors (in case you haven't heard of her, she did a concert at this year's AnimeExpo, and bills herself as the world's first live-action anime girl). Overall, I got the impression that this was a factory-style production, as in pump out anime as fast as possible and quality be

damned. It wasn't bad, but it lacked the fire and originality that a first-rate anime would have (although that could be due to the fact that there was little originality in the game premise...).

— Eric Kihara

Visionary



© 1995 U-Jin/Shuberu Publishing Co./Knack
© 1997 Central Park Media/Anime-18

A magical beauty appears to a lanky nerd, and tells him that she will grant his

wishes... no, it is not *Ah! My Goddess*. But the latest release by Anime 18, *Visionary*. This hilarious romp through the pathetic life of Ujita and Doreimon, a sexy android from the future, is a nice change of pace from the other shows I had to review. There is nudity and implied sex. Maybe not much, but enough for me to say that this is for adults.

The tape contains two stories centered around the sex-starved Ujita and his failed love life. For a change, the Sexy Android is the moral one here... actually, it does make sense, in a weird and twisted way. The stories are both funny and tasteless and the artwork is definitely something to look at. The artist U-Jin has a style that I am learning to like... and not because of the subject matter. There are lessons to be learned in each story but the one that hits the hardest is "be careful what you wish for..." you can probably imagine what Ujita would wish for, but you'll be hard pressed to imagine the results.

I probably won't be adding this tape in my collection, but that's more because I am currently living with my parents and I don't want them to see me watch this kind of stuff... after all, my allowance is low

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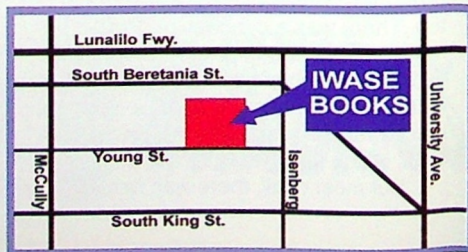
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enough as it is.

— Vid~Kid

Dragon Century



© 1995, 1996 Kubo Shoten/A.I.C.
© 1996 U.S. Renditions/Books Nippan

Well, here is a company that I thought I would never see again. US Renditions... Welcome back!!!

Here is a wonderful tale of a girl who makes a wish and gets a dragon... While most high school girls may wish for other things (what exactly I don't know, since I am not a high school girl), Riko wishes that the city be destroyed because it is dirty and corrupt. When she saves a baby dragon to raise as an angel of destruction, she is caught up in a war between demons and dragons as they battle for the fate of the world. Can the dragon Carmine convince Riko that humanity should be saved? Can Riko find it in her heart to give humanity a second chance? Will Riko survive the encounter against the Demon King?

The second of the two stories takes place after the demon invasion of 1990. Several centuries have passed, and Carmine is again partnered with a girl; this time, one who seeks the revenge of her father's death. Carmine is intrigued with Rulishia and agrees to help her. As the story progresses, Carmine discovers that the demons are returning; he is torn between his desire to help Rulishia and his duty to defend humanity.

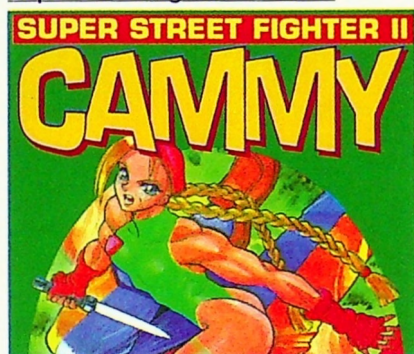
The stories are short, and the ending for each story is, in my opinion, unsatisfactory. They leave a lot unsaid, leaving you with questions. The artwork is wonderful and that in itself is a saving grace, but I'm afraid that I'll give this video a pass

unless I have some dollars that I want to spend and can't think of anything else. However, for those who are curious, I would suggest looking for it on rental first, to see if it is something you want to keep.

— Vid~Kid

MANGA

Super Street Fighter II CAMMY



© 1994 Masahiko Nakahara/CAPCOM
© 1997 Viz Graphic Novel

There are a lot of things that are not known about Cammy, even with the release of the *Street Fighter II: Animated Movie*; Cammy only had two scenes in it. Even the Jean-Claude Van Damme movie did not show enough of Cammy to suit me (I will concede that Kylie Minogue portrayed an excellent Cammy, I just wished I saw more of her...).

This graphic novel is a collection of short stories, written and drawn by Masahiko Nakahira, and although it is about Cammy, expect others to show up from time to time. The book is "timeless"; by that, I mean that you don't know when it takes place in relation to the games. Since not much is given in the game, the slate is practically clear for any interpretation, and I love what he did to fill that gap. There are hints that there is more out there, stories about other Street Fighters as well as more Cammy. I for one will start hunting for them.

The stories are multi-layered and at times, full of surprises. I know that I am not alone in my preferences; this graphic novel will be the perfect compliment for any manga-style fan. For those who are not impressed by current releases of manga-style works, I say give this a try, it might

change your opinion.

— Ross Yoshino

Legion Anthology #1



© 1997 Legion Chronicles / Limelight Publishing Co.

We at Limelight Publishing find it ethically wrong to print a review of one of our own titles in our own magazine, which is dedicated to objective opinions. As a result, there shall never be a review of *Legion Anthology* within these pages. So for those of you who still haven't figured it out: this is not a review, it's an ad.

Legion Anthology has been compiled by our sister company Legion Chronicles, for the express purpose of telling various enchanting stories in a manga format, while also making a fast buck.

The premiere issue contains three stories. The first is *Binary Angel*, a story about a girl who gets more from her video game than a free replay for getting the high score. The second story is *Atria the Grim*. A fairer fey you'll never meet than Atria, just don't get her mad. The last story in this issue is one that may be familiar to some of you, *Magical Princess Saccarine*. For those of you who don't know this Sugar Princess Super-hero, all I can say is I hope you're covered by a good dental plan.

We believe you will enjoy Legion Anthology and hope that you will pick one up at your local comic store. If they don't carry it, yell at them. If that doesn't work, feel free to contact us here at Limelight, and we'll be happy to sell you a subscription.

— William P. Hols

GAMES

Bubblegum Crisis: Before and After

The ADPolice and Bubblegum Crash! Sourcebook
© 1997 Animechanix, a division of R. Talsorian



Games, Inc.

Though designed as a role-playing supplement, this sourcebook has plenty to offer for non-gaming fans of BGC's two companion series as well. The episode guides are clear, detailed, and easy to read. Both episode guides are followed by descriptions of how society, Genom, and MegaTokyo of each series differs from 2032. Even if you don't plan to run an ADPolice or BGC! game, the information on the characters, settings, and situations brings extra depth to the shows themselves.

For those who intend to use the book as a gaming resource, the writer leaves no loose end unexplored in his intent to provide gamemasters with plenty of adventure seeds and campaign suggestions. The adventure synopses also maintain the spirit of each series, and the dozen character templates expand on character ideas aside from the Knight Sabers.

The only clear failing of the book lies in its attempt at hardsuit/mecha construction rules. The writer explains apologetically that a properly detailed system for building original hardsuits, powered armors, Boomers, et al. would fill its own sourcebook. He then suggests that people who want to build their own mecha should buy yet another book, R. Talsorian's *Mekton Zeta Plus*™. This is worse than the suggestion in the main gamebook, that players should simply mix-and-match parts from the Knight Sabers' suits for new hardsuit designs. The writer would have done well to follow the example of the writ-

ers of *Champions: New Millennium*™, in which simplified versions of the rules for skills, martial arts, and powers were included in the gamebook, with guidelines for expanding the provided character elements.

All in all "Before And After" is an informative, inspiring supplement to the Bubblegum Crisis game. It is worth the price tag for gamers and non-gamers alike.

— D.A. Graf

CD-ROM

Slayers Royal



© 1997 Kadokawa Shoten/ESP, 6800 yen

Let me get straight to the point: this game sure doesn't disappoint, with animated sequences that could be mistaken for portions of the TV series, original voice actors from both series doing the voices, and battle sequences that somehow manage to retain the "3D-ness" of the Playstation™ without sacrificing the "anime-ness" of *Slayers*, something the Saturn seems to do well with anime-related games in general. Combine that with less than 5 second wait time, one pause for every two, maybe three, *entire* segments of animation and audio with pictures; that's a good 5-10 minutes of *uninterrupted* game enjoyment. In fact, I found only two problems with the graphics and sound: one is the occasional graininess of the picture quality, minor compared to your awe over the animation, and the second being that Naga laughs every three seconds in every combat round (which last forever, since everyone has 3-4 swipes at an opponent before the next turn), some-

thing that is VERY annoying unless you turn the sound off, which is a pity.

Did I mention that this was an RPG? It says so on the cover, but it's misleading. You don't have much choice about where you want to go next, and you can't even talk to anyone on the street. Combat (placing your characters on the field like a chessboard as opposed to the *Final Fantasy*-style "keep pressing the fight button") isn't random; rather, it's a series of forced combats which lead you to the next plot line of the story. For someone used to *Chrono Trigger*-type games, I found this lack of choice restrictive. All in all, the game became less like an RPG and more like a new episode of *Slayers*, of which I was an active participant. The graphics and sound made it that much easier. With that in mind, I highly recommend this game to all *Slayers* fans, young or old—here's hoping they import this one into the States.

— Shizuku

MUSIC

Mach Go Go Go



© 1997 Tatsunoko Productions - Tokyo Television

Direct from Tatsunoko Productions and Nippon Columbia Recording Co. comes a new twist on a classic anime icon that rocks. It's *Mach Go Go Go*, aka *Speed Racer*.

The new theme is titled "Jyunbaku no Energy" and its closing, titled "Fly to the Dream." Granted it won't be a classic "Go Speed Racer, Go Speed Racer - Go" or

even a "Maha Go Go, Maha Go Go - Go." It's a rocking new 1997 track that's destined to become a classic. This mini-CD contains four tracks—the first two are the initial lyric cuts, and the rest are instrumental versions for all the karaoke buffs out there.

If you can't find it, use the serial number COCD-1139 and place an order with your local Japanese music shop. Get it, slap it in and enjoy!

— Karl Kletzker



continued from p 21

Kaede. Only now it seems that only her death can kill the *aragami*, a switch on the old story in which the dragon had to die to spare her life. *Kusanagi*, the sacred sword *Susano-o* found in the dragon's tail, is back, this time as *Kusanagi Mamoru*, surely one of anime's oddest romantic heroes. *Susano-o* is back too in *Blue Seed* and as unpredictable as ever. This time he seems to be on the side of the *aragami* and in a destructive mood, but that doesn't necessarily make him a villain. Even the TAC team who fights him are divided about what to make of *Susano-o*'s rebirth.

One of their number, Kaede, has already gone over to *Susano-o*'s side. *Kunikida Daitetsu*, the conservative leader of TAC, often mutters about the spiritual and environmental pollution of modern day Japan, and wonders if a destructive god isn't just what's needed. He theorizes that *Susano-o*'s return may represent a form of purification. For a loving, idealistic young person like Momiji, however, the human cost of such "purification" is unthinkable. Still other TAC members have even more ambivalent attitudes. The Japanese have never known quite what to think of *Susano-o*, and at least in *Blue Seed*, they still don't.

Questions? Rants and raves?
You can reach Toni Levi at
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